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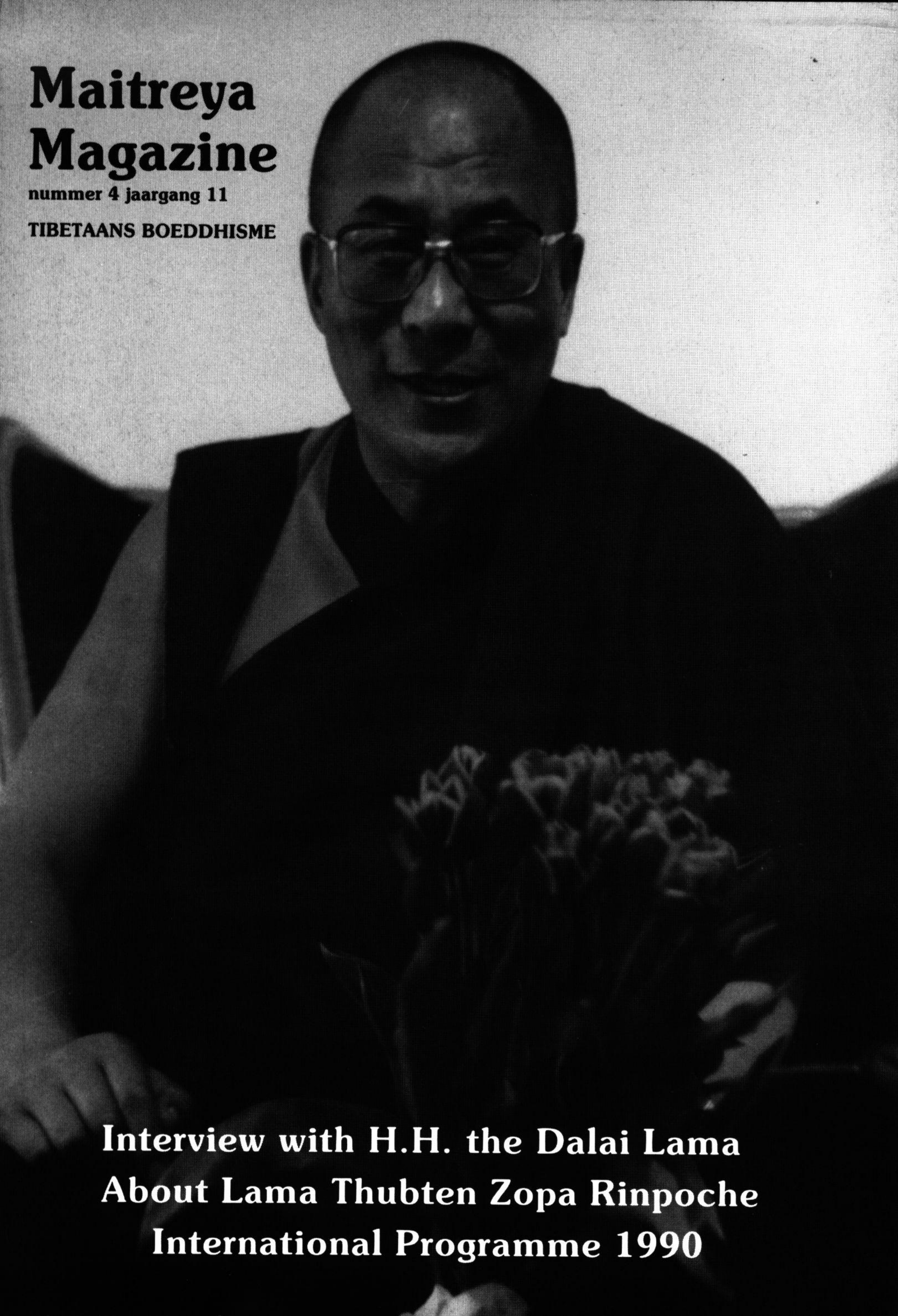
TIBETAANS BOEDDHISME



Interview with H.H. the Dalai Lama
About Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche
International Programme 1990

Maitreya Instituut

MEMBER OF THE F.P.M.T.

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De stichting stelt zich tot doel:
Het bevorderen van de interesse en studie, het beoefenen en uitbreiden van het boeddhisme, v.n.m.l. in de vorm waarin het in TIBET heeft bestaan en te komen tot een vruchtbare integratie van Oosterse en Westerse filosofieën in Nederland.

FIRST ENGLISH EDITION

Maitreya Magazine is a publication of Maitreya Institute in the Dutch language. At the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the magazine it was decided to publish an English edition for all our brothers and sisters all over the world. Special thanks go to Karmen Burrage for translating from Dutch to English, as well as Edward, Lucienne, Koosje, Lynne, Paula and Carla who have done transcribing, translation and correction. The editing and lay-out was done by Jan-Paul Kool.

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COVER

Foto: Jan Paul Kool

Lama Ösel Rinpoche

From the publisher

We are pleased to present this Maitreya Magazine, a Dutch quarterly, for the first time in the English language at the occasion of its ten year's anniversary. The inspiration to start this magazine came from Lama Yeshe who thought it would be good to offer the public a programme of the courses at Maitreya Institute combined with relevant articles on the Buddha-Dharma.

In this edition we have used some articles already published before in Dutch as well as some new material. We present an interview with H.H. the Dalai Lama, who has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 1990, followed by looking back on ten years Maitreya Institute. An article about Lama Zopa Rinpoche, our beloved spiritual guide, is followed by the Upasaka vows for lay practioners and Lama Yeshe's big vision. Tibetan astrology, Mönlam Chenmo, Mandala's, Tibetan Medicine in Holland and Lama's final teaching are the subjects of the other articles. In the International Programme you will find the details about Lama Zopa Rinpoche's European Lam Rim course 1990.

With greetings to all our friends, brothers and sisters all over the world, we dedicate this magazine to the fulfillment of the wishes of H.H. the Dalai Lama.

The editor

MESSAGE FROM LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE

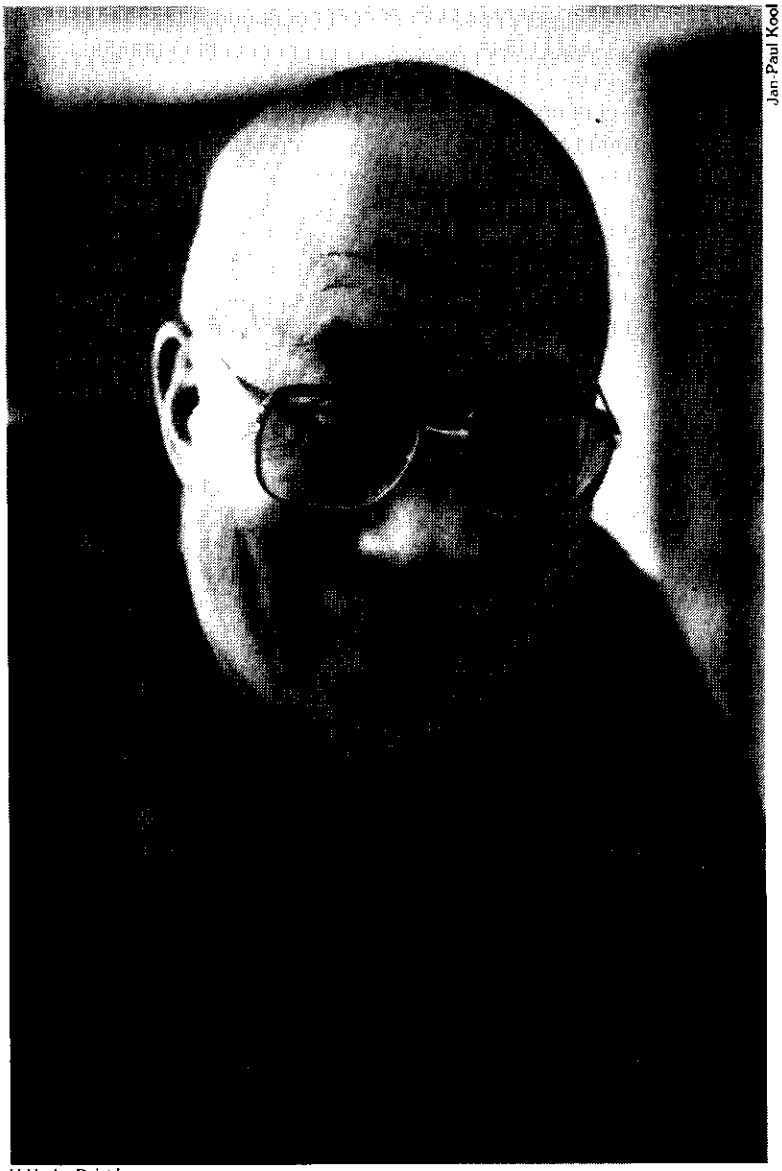
I am sending my greetings and express manifold thanks to the students and members of Maitreya Institute Holland, as well as donors and supporters for the continuation of the Maitreya center up to today.

It is said by Shantideva in the Bodhicaryavatara: "No external thing can cease the poisonous mind - ignorance, attachment and anger - the cause of suffering which is in their mental continuum." Therefore suffering can't be ceased by external methods (not even by medicine). It is only by the teachings of the Buddha (Right Path), so therefore the teachings of the Dharma are the only means to eradicate the cause of suffering. Without the teachings there is no happiness for sentient beings. That is why Shantideva said: "The only medicine to cure migratory beings' suffering and from where all happiness comes, are the teachings." May these teachings exist for a long time with offerings and respect.

This center functions to preserve and spread the teachings to eliminate sentient beings' suffering. So one can understand how beneficial and important the teachings are to sentient beings and how they are of utmost need. The center has been established to serve and spread the teachings to others to remove their suffering. The bodhisattva who is stabilized in supreme perseverance in order to generate one virtuous thougt in one sentient being's mind will happily spend many eons in the worst naraks and does not get upset, so please continue the center's existence and develop. Again, thank you very much, with my love and prayers,

Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche

Interview with H.H. the Dalai Lama


Jan-Paul Kool

H.H. the Dalai Lama

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW ON THE OCCASION OF MAITREYA MAGAZINE'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY.

Interviewer: Dutch Buddhist monk Thubten Lodroe (Hermes Brandt).
Place: His Holiness's residence in Dharamsala, India.
Date: januari 20, 1989.

The interview was held in English, with an occasional Tibetan term. It was edited c.q. translated by the interviewer.

Thubten Lodroe: "The first question. Mahayanists strive to become Buddha, but it is difficult to have an idea of what it is actually like to be Buddha, to have some concrete idea. What does it feel like to be enlightened? what kind of experience is it?"

His Holiness: (laughs) "I can't say. The enlightened feeling, the experience?"

Thubten Lodroe: "Yes."

His Holiness: "I think being enlightened means to know fully. So now you see, at least that part we can know to some extent from our experience. When something is difficult to understand or to see, once you get to see it clearly and understand it well, you feel some kind of satisfaction, isn't it? At least on that point you have some kind of full confidence. Now this is this. That is that. Now when that same mind has gradually become enlightened, it fully understands, fully realizes everything. Then of course you get some kind of deep satisfaction. From that viewpoint you can understand.

Especially as a human being, when you are confronted with some kind of ignorance, you feel uncomfortable and try to realize that. Once you realize it, once that obstacle has vanished, you feel tremendously relieved. Something like that. So that way you can know something. You can have an idea of the mental happiness or mental satisfaction on the level of a Buddha."

Thubten Lodroe: "Ordinary people experience the earth as round, circling around the universe. Do persons with higher realizations experience the universe as flat with Mount Meru in the center?"

His Holiness: "No, I don't think so. This is not a question of higher or lower levels of spiritual experience. Within the Buddhist explanation there are different versions about the world. Usually the ancient Tibetan scholar - of course in that time the modern concepts had not yet come to Tibet - said on that subject that due to different karmic influences, karmic factors, for certain people the world appears in a different way. Like when a human being, a god and a preta, three sentient beings, look at one bowl of water. At the same time - perhaps you know this, due to special karmic influences the human being can see it as water, while the god sees nectar and the preta sees blood or something like that. The same object, due to a special force of karma, appears differently. So some Tibetan scholars explain it that way, that if somewhere a flat world exists, then it appears to certain people as round.

However, I personally feel the scientific version is authentic. That has been tested and proved. So then as a Buddhist and particularly as a mahayana Buddhist who places more credence on reasons rather than on quotations or scriptures, then of course...

In the Buddhist scriptures, Buddha mentioned a variety of worlds and universes. I think some are comparatively flat. That does not mean that the entire universe should be flat, not necessarily. This entire earth is round, but India, the land of the Aryas, is comparatively flat. That meaning could also be possible. Anyway, this is not a question of level of spiritual experiences.

On the other hand, seeing a Buddha statue just as a statue, without speech or

anything, that appearance depends very much on one's own spiritual experiences. For example, the Avalokiteshvara statue which occasionally came to the main temple and which usually stays with me here, for us, including the Dalai Lama, it is just a statue, no speech. But the fifth Dalai Lama received many initiations and many teachings from this very same statue. This is not due to the statue, but due to our own spiritual experiences. Today we see just a statue but when our internal experience, our spiritual experience, develops higher and higher then it becomes living. So that kind of thing is very much related to the spiritual experience.

And also now you see, for us this table is solid. Once you realize the deeper nature of shunya (emptiness, Ed.), or the deeper realization of all these things being a creation of mind, that does not mean you deny these are external matter. You accept them as external matter. At the same time they are ultimately, how to say, a creation or reflection of the clear light. When you fully experience that deep realization and you touch the table, it is no longer solid. For that person it is no more solid, no longer an obstacle. So these things being solid or not depends on the person. Have you seen those hand prints, either in metal or stone...?"

Thubten Lodroe: "I have seen many hand and foot prints in rocks in Tibet, made by lamas."

His Holiness: "Clear?"

Thubten Lodroe: "Very clear."

His Holiness: "Mmm."

Thubten Lodroe: "Approximately how many Indians have reached highest enlightenment since Shakyamuni Buddha started teaching and how many Tibetans?"

His Holiness, bursting out laughing: "I don't know."

Thubten Lodroe: "Approximately, just to have an idea, two, ten, one million?"

His Holiness: "Indians? I think, if you consider the ones that are well-known, I think one thousand. And then those who are not well-known, I don't know, that is difficult to say, I think at least a few millions. Now in the case of the Tibetans, I think well-known perhaps a few hundred; then unknown ones perhaps a few hundred thousand, I don't know, that is difficult to say, actually very difficult to say.

Now if you ask how it is today, then (His Holiness laughs) it is more difficult to say. It should be easier to tell what the present situation is than the past history, but I think in this case it is more difficult to say. (His Holiness laughs.) Now this is partly because genuine Buddhist practitioners usually very much hide their inner qualities, they don't show. For example, one rule of the bhikshus (fully ordained Buddhist monks, Ed.) states that, if you have reached the state of arhat (a being liberated from cyclic existence, Ed.) and you tell that, truthfully, you get the downfall of "truly claiming to be an arhat." At present, as far as I know, there are some people who have deep realizations, and with that some extraordinary experiences, but whether they are fully enlightened, that is difficult to say, very difficult."

Thubten Lodroe: "Does Your Holiness think there has already been a westerner who has reached highest enlightenment?"

His Holiness: "Highest?"

Thubten Lodroe: "Highest."

His Holiness: "Highest... I think there are two ways, two categories. One is due to something like reincarnation - someone taking birth who has actually already achieved the highest spiritual experiences, I think that is possible. That is one category. That is always possible, not only in the human community, but also in the animal community.

Then, the other category, an ordinary person who gets a new opportunity, comes into a new situation and practises Buddhadharma and doing that reaches a certain stage, I think that is difficult at the moment. Mahayana Buddhism has existed in the West at the maximum maybe four or five decades. I think Buddhism from theravadin countries reached the West perhaps late nineteenth century but - strictly speaking from the mahayana viewpoint - without the realization of shunya and without the genuine experience of bodhicitta it is impossible to achieve the ten bhumis (the ten stages of the superior bodhisattva, Ed.). So you see, the hinayana teaching alone cannot lead to these states. Through the theravadin system, the thirty-seven branches of enlightenment such as the four mindfulnesses, there is a possibility to achieve arhatship, but not the highest enlightenment. So therefore it is difficult, within such a short period very difficult.

But then at the same time I have noticed that some westerners have achieved extraordinary experiences through the different practices. In some cases, somehow it seems easier to develop spiritual experiences for a westerner than for a Tibetan. That strangely seems to be the case with some persons. Maybe it is because westerners have a very practical approach. Sometimes we (Tibetans) accept (Buddhism) very easily but do not put much effort in the actual practice. But maybe it is due to past karmic force, I don't know."

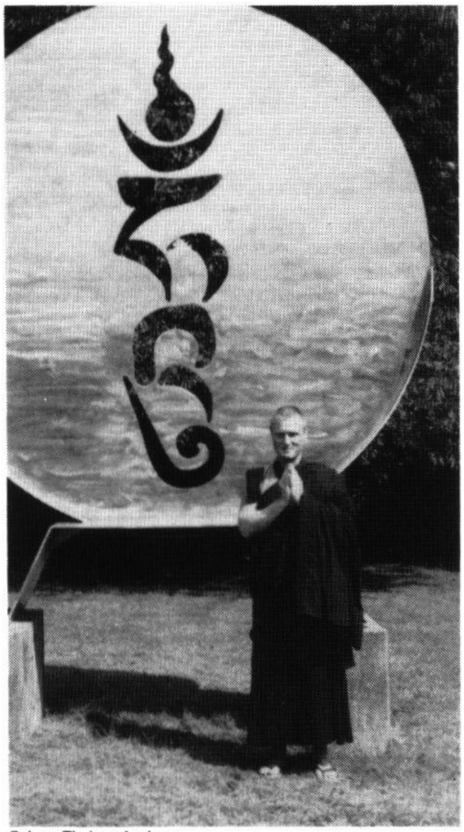
Thubten Lodroe: "Do you think it will be long before westerners also start to reach enlightenment in big numbers?"

His Holiness: "Oh yes, of course. Actually, more than half of the five thousand year period of existence of Buddha's teaching or doctrine has passed. Generally speaking, there is an overall decline now. That makes a difference."

Thubten Lodroe: "It is more difficult now."

His Holiness: "Yes. But of course individual cases are still possible. Whole masses of people achieving certain things, that occurred mostly during Buddha's time. But for individuals it is still possible."

"Strange question." (His Holiness laughs) "I think it is good. I think for westerners these questions are very important. Usually, according to my own experience, among the three objects of refuge, the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, the Sangha is very important in a sense, almost like a... My feeling is, when you are running a race and you see a competitor far ahead, it is difficult to develop the determination to catch up, isn't it? But if someone is just a few feet away, another ten feet, and again another twenty feet, then there is the feeling of hope and competition. "He got there, I can do it too," that kind of feeling, isn't it? So in that sense, Buddha is something far away for us, isn't it? But when you see the Sangha on the level of tenth bhumi or the ninth bhumi or the first bhumi and even before that, those on the path of preparation and those on the path of accumulation, you feel you can do it too. Another one is just a little above us, not far. "I can get there too", that kind of feeling. So therefore, knowing that there are people who are just ahead of you gives you some kind of ge-



Gelong Thubten Lodroe

nuine inspiration, athough they have not achieved the highest level of enlightenment. Good."

Thubten Lodroe: "Your Holiness is interviewed very often. Are there any questions that interviewers never ask but Your Holiness feels should be asked?"

His Holiness reflects for a few seconds, then says laughing: "Nothing."

Thubten Lodroe: "Finally, does Your Holiness have any message for the readers of Maitreya Magazine?"

His Holiness: "Greetings. I think in the present world situation, humanity on this small planet seems to develop a basic natural human feeling. For example, people dislike war, isn't it? A genuine desire for peace and mutual love and respect seems to grow and I think that feelings of nationality or national boundaries are comparatively less in people's minds. International differences are considered less important. There is more awareness of the importance of global ways. People are also more concerned about the environment.

In other words, the global trend seems to be that the basic human spirit is gaining the upper hand. I feel this is a positive indication. Under these circumstances we, especially if we practise, if we believe in the importance of love and compassion, should think seriously about the meaning of universal responsibility. I think externally the general atmosphere seems favorable and indicates we need that kind of human attitude and should develop it. This is my feeling. So reader, our friend, look into this situation. Then practise well and let us try to contribute as much as we can."

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE PUT TO HIS HOLINESS BY THUBTEN LODROE DURING A GROUP AUDIENCE FOR STUDENTS OF TUSHITA RETREAT CENTER IN DHARAMSALA ON NOVEMBER 2, 1988. ALL HAVE BEEN FORMULATED BY THE STUDENTS. WHEN HIS HOLINESS SPOKE IN TIBETAN, HIS WORDS WERE TRANSLATED BY TENZIN DORJE. THE TEXT WAS LIGHTLY EDITED BY THE INTERVIEWER.

His Holiness: "Greetings. I am very glad to meet you as a Dharma friend."

Thubten Lodroe: "Given that Buddha's teachings were not written down for hundreds of years how can we be sure that they are accurate?"

His Holiness: "There are different texts and teachings and erveryone claims they originally came from Buddha himself. At the same time there are different scriptures so it's difficult to accept that all are correct. After the Buddha, learned realized scholars deliberated on the teachings and mahasiddhas (highly realized yogis, Ed.) practised the doctrine sincerely. They internalized the teachings and gained realizations. When a teaching enables you to gain realizations, it is a reliable one. So whether a teaching or scripture is reliable or not depends on whether or not one can gain realizations by using it.

It is difficult to prove that a teaching comes from Buddha or not, very difficult to prove. We have to compare those texts that everyone accepts as authentic. Nagarjuna, Arya Asangha, Shantideva, Chandrakirti or Dharmakirti's teachings can be compared and it can be seen whether their teachings go according to the authentic texts or not.

Particularly in certain tantric teachings there may be differences in terminology. In those cases we can't make judgements on words only, but rather on meanings. So even if the words are not identical with the original text, if they accord well with what is said in the authentic text, then we can accept that teaching or text as reliable and authentic.

Then the third method is practice! If through some practice you gain some experience or if in your daily life you find the teachings of a particular book or text useful, especially when you are facing certain external or internal problems, then accept it! If you do not find it beneficial, then leave it. That is the only way.

If there is a certain text that is not accepted as authentic then there's debate and argument. So by using these methods you can find out if a certain teaching is authentic or not."

Thubten Lodroe: "Should the Buddha's teachings on the three lower realms be accepted literally?"

His Holiness: "If one accepts the existence of the three lower realms, no logical reasoning can harm one's position. If we don't find contradictions regarding the lower realms with our direct experience and then we want to establish the existence of the three lower realms through logical reasoning only, that is difficult. There are certain things we simply cannot prove.

In such cases what is left for us to do is to rely on valid scriptural quotations. Now for that, whether a particular quotation is reliable or not, we have to do lots of investigating analysis.

We cannot deny the existence of the three lower realms, and it's difficult to establish their existence through logical reasoning. In the Abhidharmakosha or Treasury Of Knowledge, there is a description of the environments of the three unfortunate states of rebirth. If we accept whatever the Abidharmakosha mentions it becomes contradictory with our own direct experience or perceptions.

If an assertion is harmed by valid reasoning, we cannot accept it. The basic Buddhist attitude is that the final decision is based on your own experience and reasoning. So if there is something that clearly becomes a contradiction with our experience, then even if it was said by the Buddha himself, we have to take a different interpretation or reject it. That is the basic Buddhist attitude.

Therefore if the description of the hells is contradictory to modern science, we cannot accept it. So either we have to take a different interpretation, or simply reject it."

Thubten Lodroe: "So should we interpret it differently or reject it?"

Andy Weber

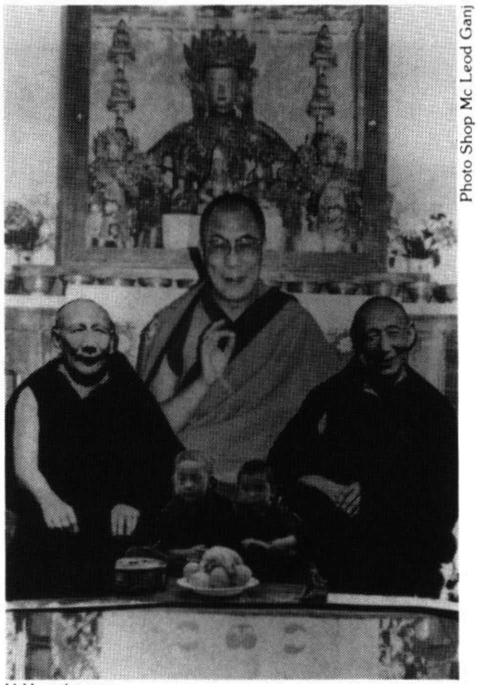
His Holiness: "About selflessness, there are a lot of different interpretations. According to the Madhyamika school of thought we find the presentation of the coarse selflessness of a person. Even though this explanation is not completely accurate, it is given out of necessity according to the dispositions of certain individuals or groups of people. But from a general point of view, one may reject that explanation or interpretation. With the understanding that Buddha said such things out of necessity, we can reject those things."

Thubten Lodroe: "So in this case of the three lower realms?"

His Holiness: "We cannot refute their existence. It's quite clear that there are certain things we cannot prove by conventional logic. Unless oneself experiences a certain thing, it's beyond our mental capacity. That is a fact. Within the framework of an ordinary consciousness we can neither prove nor disprove the existence of the three lower realms. Neither can we refute or establish the existence of the three lower realms by means of evidence or proof. Still we speculate about the existence of the three lower realms, because there are scriptural quotations which confirm their existence. And we don't have the capability to reject their existence.

The ultimate reason is, "I don't think." That is the only way. We cannot make any definite statement about the three bad migrations. We may say, "I don't think that they exist." That much we can say. If we think about the I that makes the statement "I don't think", is that I an omniscient one, an all-knowing I? If we believe in something, it is not absolutely necessary that it is something valid, and if we feel that something exists, we can't be totally sure if it really exists or not. So we have to follow the texts. So it's clear that there is a limit to our mental capacity. So under those circumstances it's difficult to reject.

More than that, obviously the animal world is there, and quite probably there are other sentient beings, different shapes, different forms, and even on other planets. That's almost certain. So it's very likely that there are beings with different forms, sizes, feelings and experiences and also different environments - sometimes having more physical pain, sometimes more mental pain, that's also possible. Therefore more reasons can be cited for the existence of the lower realms than for their non-existence."



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H.H. with tutors

Thubten Lodroe: "It is possible to attain enlightenment by following other religious traditions and practices?"

His Holiness: "You mean non-Buddhist?"

Thubten Lodroe: "Yes."

His Holiness: "Liberation or enlightenment?"

Thubten Lodroe: "Enlightenment."

His Holiness: "That depends on how one defines enlightenment. In different schools of thought we find different explanations of enlightenment and liberation. Now the enlightenment and liberation explained in Buddhism is entirely based on the wisdom of shunyata. So only through practicing those teachings that explain about shunyata is it possible to find that kind of liberation.

In the same way, the heaven described in the Christian teachings, whether that goal can be achieved through Buddhist practices, I can answer "No". So I think when the final judgement happens, the Buddhist remain in one corner. When the nature of the goal is different, the method is different. So it becomes speciality for different teachings. Liberation explained in Buddhism is something uniquely Buddhist. Heaven and such things are uniquely Christian. At the beginning of the practice, at the preliminary level, all teachings are the same - trying to reduce anger, hatred and these things and trying to increase love, compassion and these things. Again, on that level, there is a different way of approach and different philosophy. There may be some differences, but generally it is the same teaching, the same goal. So, there is a common ground.

I think it is possible that a practitioner is half Christian, half Buddhist. Like being in the lower class at school. At that level, the students are more or less the same. Then one advances higher and higher and one becomes an expert in a certain field."

Thubten Lodroe: "According to Tibetan Buddhism, is it more difficult for women to gain enlightenment, and do they need to aspire for male rebirth?"

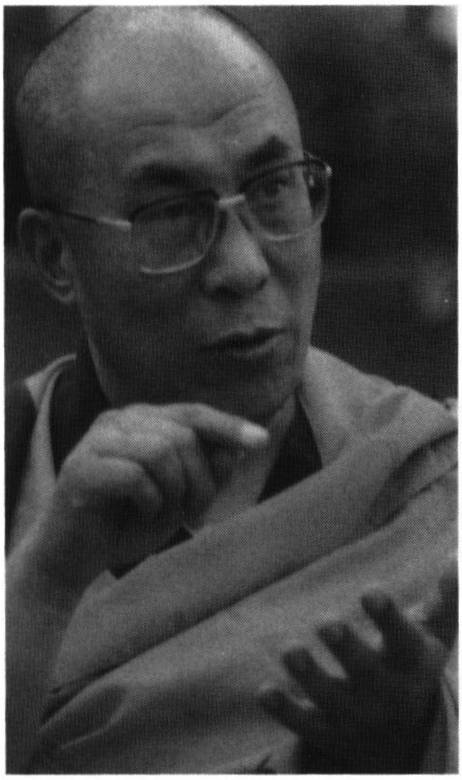
His Holiness: "According to the Vinaya Sutra, Sutrayana and the three lower tantras yes, in the final life before attaining enlightenment one has to be a male. In Tibetan Buddhism, the final authority is Maha Anuttara Yoga Tantra, in which it is clearly mentioned that male and female are equal and they both can attain enlightenment on their respective bases. In the highest yoga tantra more emphasis is made on cultivating respect for women. In the fourteen root tantric vows, there is a vow to not despise women, but disparaging men is not breaking that vow. So according to Maha Anuttara Yoga Tantra man and woman are equal, that is clear."

Thubten Lodroe: "Many have doubts about reincarnation. Would Your Holiness kindly describe His own experience of this process?"

His Holiness: "That is a complicated thing. One of the reasons is that we have to investigate form and formless, and whether such a thing as consciousness exists or not. First we have to establish this. First we have to establish existent and non-existent phenomena. That which is established by valid perception is what is called existent. If something is not established by valid perception, valid cognition, it doesn't exist. Existent phenomena can be classified into two, those which are dependent on causes and conditions and those which are not.

Regarding phenomena that are dependent on causes and conditions, there are three types of phenomena. Colors and shapes and these things that we can see and touch is category of form or matter. Then there are things we can understand only through feeling and experience. That is the category of consciousness. A third category are those phenomena such as time or persons which are neither form nor consciousness but are dependent on causes and conditions.

The phenomena belonging to these three categories are all dependent on causes and conditions so we can speak



of their substantial causes and their cooperatieve conditions. So by discovering the substantial cause of consciousness we trace back to the original cause of consciousness. Those who doubt the existence of previous lives, do they also doubt the existence of consciousness? That is the key factor. Once you accept the existence of consciousness, then do more investigation on what is the substantial cause of consciousness.

Matter cannot be the substantial cause of consciousness nor can consciousness become the substantial cause of matter. On this basis we can establish the existence of former lives.

Another aspect is that if we accept rebirth without beginning, we find less contradictions. If we accept that there is a beginning point of rebirth we find more contradictions. Or we have to say that sentient beings have been born without causes. That is difficult to accept. If we say sentient beings have been born adventitiously, why have they been born like that? We find it hard to give an explanation. Lots of questions and contradictions remain. Another point is accepting God as creator. That also raises many questions.

So, Buddhists accept the beginninglessness of rebirths, of self or consciousness. There are still some questions, but I think less questions. The beginning of the universe, galaxies, why these things happen, we have to find accurate answers to all these questions.

The third aspect is the individual person's experiences. Some young people remember their past lives very clearly. So unless there are previous lives, how can these children remember their past lives? Some explanations could be given, but they may be difficult to accept.

So these are the reasons to explain the existence of previous lives. If someone finds it hard to believe in these things, there is no need to push. If a person believes in just one life, that person should try to be a good person. The future will come. If there is no future life, in some case it is maybe better, simpler, but that one life should be a good life. At least one should not create any trouble for others. That is important. If there is only one life of about a hundred years, you should use it in the maximum way to create calmness and peace in your own mind and for your neighbours. That is most important. Then if there is no next life, then all right. Even if someone does not accept future lives, but in reality there are future lives, then he or she has made all the good arrangements and preparations. Like those of us who always explain about next lives, but are not doing proper things in our daily lives. So although we speak about the existence of future lives, in reality we're not making preparations for our future. So being a good human being, that is the most important thing.

Thubten Lodroe: "When is it appropriate to begin the practice of tantra and how do we know it will be beneficial?"

His Holiness: "In order to practise tantra one must have a good understanding of bodhicitta and the wisdom understanding emptinesss. From the depth of one's heart, one must have the sincere aspiration seeking the altruistic attitude or the mind of enlightenment, and insight into emptiness. If one knows the view of emptiness and how it is the antidote to delusions, this would enable one to understand the effectiveness of tantric practice. If one has no interest in tantric practice, then it is a different matter. Otherwise what I feel is that tantric practice is really beneficial."

Thubten Lodroe: "Would Your Holiness help me to understand bodhicitta and how to bring it through my heart and into my daily life?'

His Holiness: "The most important thing is the time factor. Bodhicitta and altruism are not very difficult to understand. For the actual experience of the actual strong force of altruism, the major factor is time. Familiarization is the most important thing. Within a short period we cannot expect to genuinely experience bodhicitta. From a Buddhist point of view, it may take eons to gain intimacy with this altruistic attitude. So, it is not easy.

So, first realize that the time factor is important, then realize the importance of the goal. If we could convince ourselves of the importance of the goal we are seeking, then we will not mind how long it takes us to reach our goal. If the goal is not clear then we might feel if it can easily be reached, that is good. But if it proves to be difficult, then we may even drop it. So it is all dependent on the time factor as you can see.

How would you feel if we did a short meditation together?"

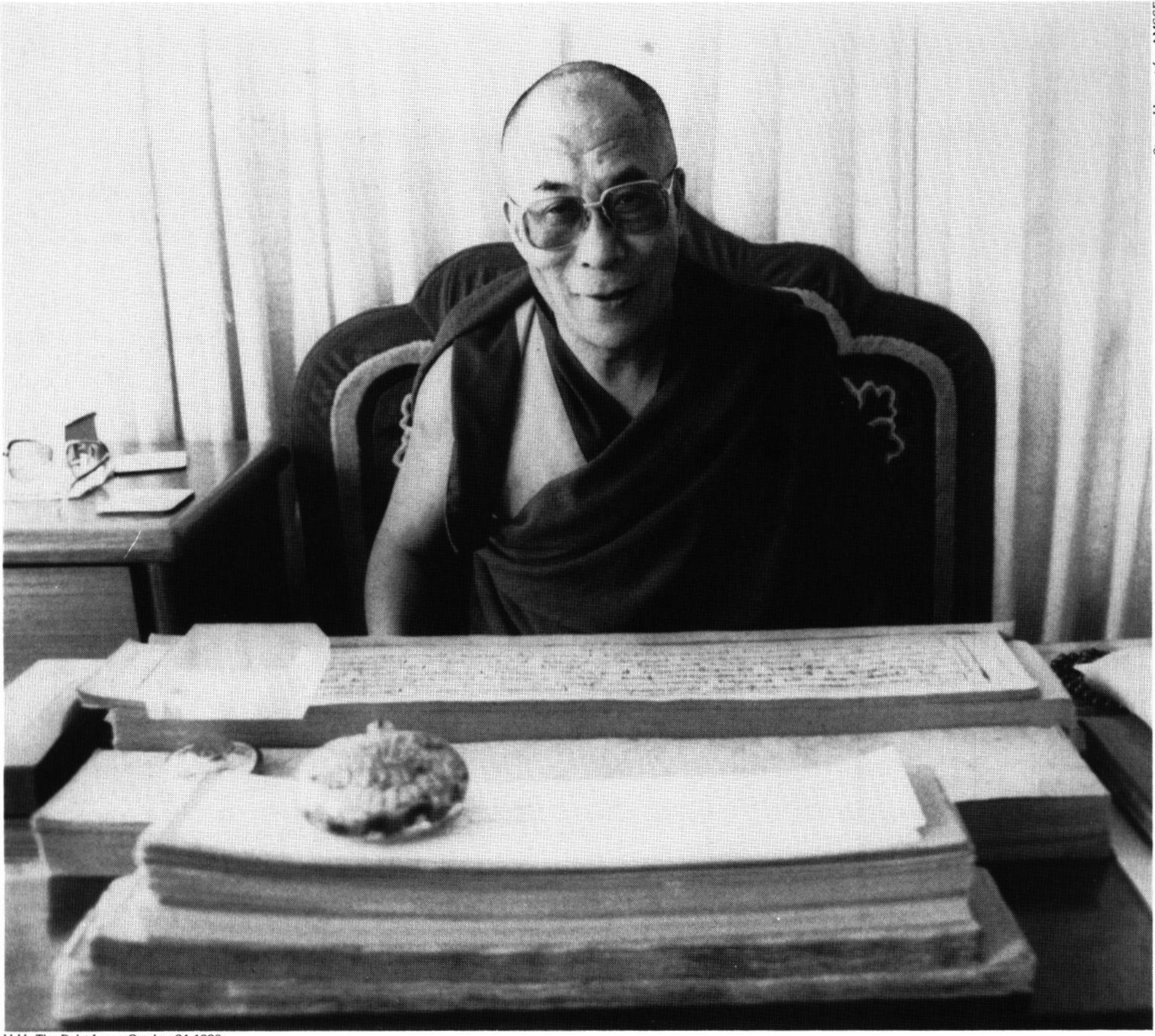
(His Holiness and the group meditate together for about five minutes.)

His Holiness: "When different states of mind arise and we apprehend various objects, these states of mind arise in the aspect of image of those objects. Because of this, the mind becomes obscured by the images of objects. So if we try to prevent the mind from arising in the aspect of those objects, slowly and gradually we will be able to keep the mind at a distance from those objects. Then the mind will not easily arise in the image of those objects. Then we will be able to see the clear nature of the mind.

This clear nature of the mind is not something precious or holy, but it's very important for us to be able to experience it. The reason we practice Dharma is to bring about changes within our minds. To bring about these inner transformations, it is very important to understand and see the clear nature of the mind.

In our daily life, even in our dreams, our minds are distracted by external things. So in a way we completely neglect to look within ourselves, to watch our own minds or consciousness. So try to look within yourselves as much as possible.

When you meditate, if you completely close your eyes, that is not good. If the eyes are focused on something attractive, that attractive object will draw us to it. Then the primary mind will go to that object. So it is good to find an object that is not so attractive that it might distract your mind and then focus your eyes on that object. That means your eye consciousness is placed on that object, but don't let the primary mind, the main consciousness, go towards that object.



Simon IJspeert for AMSSE

H.H. The Dalai Lama October 24 1990

Generate a strong feeling that you're not going to let this primary, main consciousness be disturbed by any conceptual thoughts dealing with any sensual objects such as sounds and so on. Make this a strong decision.

When we decide not to allow our minds to be distracted by conceptual thoughts, it seems that more conceptual thoughts arise. This shows that usually in our daily lives we do not pay much attention to how many conceptual thoughts arise within ourselves.

When we do this, after some time we will experience a kind of vacuity. Usually our minds are attracted towards different objects. When this connection is cut, with more practice we will experience a sort of vacuity which is the gap between the mind and those objects. We have created a distance between them. When we try to place the mind on that vacuity and we achieve some mental stability then it is possible to experience the clear and cognitive nature of the mind. Once we are able to have some experience of this, we can make a plan for our different practices.

Good, thank you."

ANOTHER INTERVIEW WITH H.H. THE DALAI LAMA WAS MADE BY LOUWRIEN WIJERS FOR ART MEETS SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY IN A CHANGING ECONOMY, ON OCTOBER 24, 1989 AT DHARAMSALA, INDIA. WE ARE FORTUNATE TO GIVE YOU HERE AN EXCERPT FROM THAT INTERVIEW, LIGHTLY EDITED BY JAN-PAUL KOOL.

Question: Your Holiness, you have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 1990. Once more world attention is focussed on Your Holiness and on the Tibetan cause. How are you going to use this new momentum?

H.H.: I feel this a good opportunity to introduce and explain the importance, and the value of compassion, love and forgiveness. You see, this prize is something like a recognition of the value of non-violence motivated by compassion. So I think it is a good opportunity to explain the good things about compassion, love, forgiveness and non-violence.

Q: Who will appoint the new Panchen Lama?

H.H.: Traditionally the Dalai Lama does this.

Q: When will we know?

H.H.: The most important thing is that we should have the correct reincarnation of the late Panchen Lama. The unmistaken reincarnation. Whether he appears in or outside Tibet does not matter, it should be the right one. But frankly speaking, I am a little worried since the Chinese have no idea who the right one is. Actually this is purely a religious matter. But of course in Chinese eyes it involves a political matter. If the political implication becomes apparent in the choosing of the reincarnation it will be very unfortunate.

Q: What will be the consequence then?

H.H.: I do not know. Of course it is sad if a family, due to certain reasons, neglects one member of the family, making him an outcast. If the true reincarnation appears but his recognition cannot take place for a political reason, this is very sad.

Q: Is it possible for you, or anyone else, to say how long it will take before the Panchen Lama's reincarnation could be found?

H.H.: I think three years.

Q: Your Holiness travels a lot to Europe and the United States; what kind of help are you asking for the political solution or is your message completely different?

H.H.: Usually I keep in mind wherever I go to treat others as equally important. With a sense of common responsibility I try to learn from their experience and to share my idea about the problems which we as humanity are facing. In that respect I usually explain the importance of love, compassion and these things.

Secondly, as a Buddhist monk I meet different religions and traditions. But, unfortunately, sometimes religion becomes another factor to divide humanity and to create problems. So harmony and close dialogue within various religions is very essential. And we can work together. There is common ground. If we understand the deeper level, all religions have more or less the same message and the potential to contribute mental peace and, through that, world peace. As the Dalai Lama I try to have a closer relation between the various different religions. I think I made some contribution in this respect within the last few years.

Thirdly, as a Tibetan, as the Dalai Lama I try to express my deep gratitude to all friends of Tibet. Friends who are helping the Tibetan spiritual side or Tibetan refugees with education or rehabilitation. Those people who are helping in a period when things are not going well for Tibet and Tibetans, I consider being very precious. When things are going well it is much easier to find friends.

Also I explain a lot about what really happens inside Tibet as people have very little knowledge about the real relation between China and Tibet. Our relation is something very peculiar. The western term of "sovereignty" simply does not apply to the nature of the relation. The relation between Tibet and China was more on a spiritual level, like that of a priest and disciple. And in fact nowadays international lawyers recognize the fact that Tibet was an independent country until 1949. There was no Chinese influence at all. As there is very little knowledge about these things and I consider myself a free spokesman for the Tibetan people, I explain these things when people ask me about the situation. I always like to meet different people and cultures out of curiosity. I spent my earlier life in a very isolated situation but now I have the opportunity to meet different people, cultures, traditions and ideologies, which is very useful. I am also fond of tasting from different traditions and places.

Q: How do you deal with your own people? I estimate that more than fifty percent are born here in exile. The younger people are being raised in different cultures, with different languages. How do you keep them together?

H.H.: The last thirty years, since we became refugees, we had difficult circumstances and complicated situations. Fortunately I think we are quite succesful refugees. Broadly speaking we are not only settled economically, but we also preserve our identity, our culture. As a matter of fact today the pure form of the Tibetan culture is only available in India, not in Tibet. Because of the standard of modern education in India the children here get a much better education than the children inside Tibet. So from that viewpoint we are quite fortunate. We receive help from the Indian government and from various international organisations and from many countries and especially from Holland, great help comes from that small country.

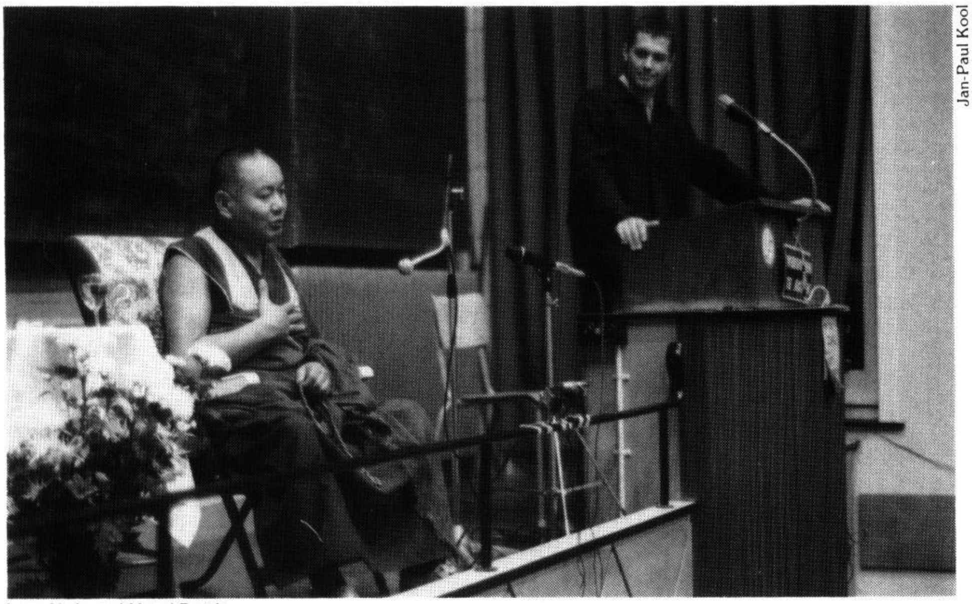
Q: You are close to our hearts.

H.H.: Thank you (laughing).

Q: What has given you the greatest satisfaction in life thus far? I realize that this is a very personal question!

H.H.: When I am in a public talk with several thousand people their reponse is usually always very warm. They show a very friendly attitude and many of them smile. That gives me real joy and happiness. If I feel I have contributed something for a short moment to their mental peace, that really gives me some kind of satisfaction.

Looking back on ten years Maitreya Institute


Jan-Paul Kool

Lama Yeshe and Marcel Bertels

Jan-Paul Kool

Gompa at Maasbommel

Jan-Paul Kool

Tara statue at Emst

The inspiration behind the founding of the Maitreya Institute came from Lama Thubten Yeshe. During the early seventies, when he and Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche were teaching Lam Rim to westerners at their monastery in Kopan, Nepal, they also had some Dutch students; in 1972 Marcel Bertels and Paula de Wijs-Koolkin met at a Lam Rim course there. After this, Paula returned to Holland and Marcel stayed on, studied, meditated, and took ordination as a Buddhist monk. In 1976 Lama Yeshe advised him to give a Lam Rim course in Holland, because he had seen that there was verly little knowledge of the Buddha Dharma in Holland, and even less in the Dutch language.

Paula organized that 'First Mahayana Meditation Course' in the summer of 1976, and the next year Jan-Paul Kool attended the second one, which inspired him enormously. The following year, Jan-Paul met Margot Stumpel in a pub. They immediately started talking about Buddhism and together went to England a few weeks later, where Margot received her first Dharma lessons from the great Song Rinpoche. Paula also attended that course, and their long-standing cooperation started there. That summer Lama Yeshe gave the budding endeavor in Holland the name Maitreya Institute.

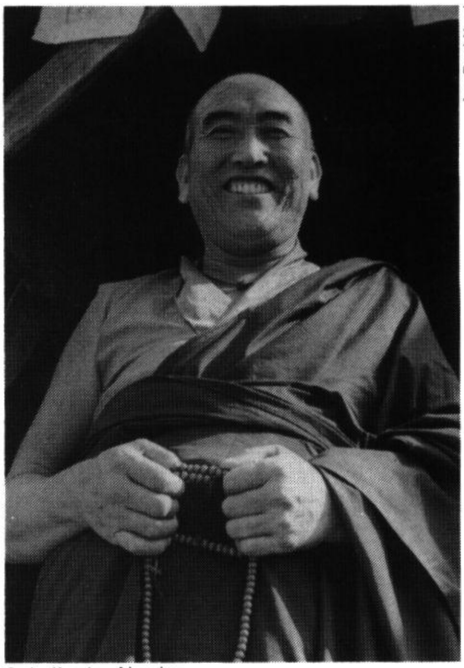
He also married Jan-Paul and Margot at a lovely ceremony; for their honeymoon they went to Tso Pema (Rewalsar) in India to live and do retreat in a cave. After six months, in May 1979, they returned to Holland and within a few days were sailing down a river, past Paula's houseboat, and she called out to them that the Lamas were coming to Holland for the first time that summer! Together they organized that event, and afterwards, Lama Yeshe gave them the advice to start a Dharma magazine in Dutch (this was the beginning of the Maitreya Magazine) and to invite teachers monthly to give courses in Holland. Soon after this, Jan-Paul and Margot took over the organization of the Lam Rim course while Paula went to the United States to help with the first visit of H.H. the Dalai Lama there. When she returned, the monthly courses were already taking place, with senior Dharma students from England and Germany and Switzerland as teachers. In December 1979 the Foundation Maitreya Institute was formed, with Paula as Chairlady, Margot as Secretary and Jan-Paul as Treasurer.

While still in the beginning phase, more and more people began to come to the weekends and longer courses given by Western students and also by great teachers such as Geshe Tegchok and Serkong Rinpoche, who much enjoyed visiting Holland. As more people became interested, everyone began to look for a suitable location for a more permanent premises, and finally a big, beautiful house was found in Bruchem - just before another visit by Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa to Holland. Three couples came to live in the house in Bruchem to organize the centre and later also the monk Hans van den Bogaert, who had lived in Dharamsala for many years, and who had a lot of Dharma knowledge, joined the group. His help in translating teachings and sadhanas into Dutch was invaluable. Later, Alex van Baar, Ton Memelink and Jan Bijman joined the group (they are now all ordained) and living at the centre (Thon lives at Nalanda Monastery). At first everyone thought that if one is a Buddhist, one could handle any situation. However, there was a great deal of work to be done, and the house proved to be very impractical and the living situation became difficult. When the decision was made to move to another location, the families moved off on their own, and in September 1983, Maitreya Institute moved to a beautiful place in Maasbommel. Paula remained living in Amsterdam but continued to visit the centre every week.

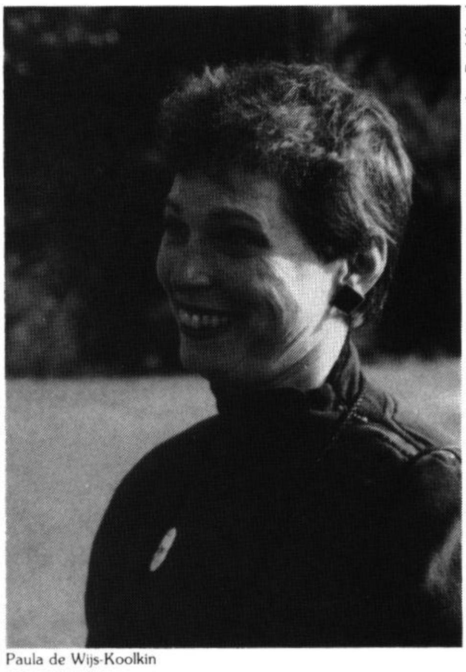
In July 1984, after years of urging Lama Yeshe to send the centre a resident teacher, Geshe Kunchog Lhundup came to live in Holland. Inspired by Geshe Kunchog Lhundup, more and more students came to the institute to practise Buddhism under his wise guidance. Teachings were translated into English by the Tibetan translator or by Hans directly into Dutch. In time the centre in Maasbommel also grew too small, and the gompa was always too noisy because it bordered the road. These problems, and after Lama Zopa stressed the importance of buying rather than renting a place, set everyone searching again for new premises. In a very short time, with the inspiration of H.H. Gaden Tripa, who was visiting the centre in June 1987, a youth hostel in Emst was found and once again the Maitreya Institute was moved. More lay people came to live in the centre and this had some positive consequences for the monks, for they now had some more time to devote to their Dharma studies. Because the property is now located in the woods, the environment is peaceful and conducive to the practice of meditation and retreats. Many students follow the monthly weekend teachings by Geshe-la or other visiting teachers. We are fortunate that monk Hermes Brandt has come to stay in Holland, and he has taken over the Dutch translation for the time being. The two-week Lam Rim course has continued to be held each year since 1976 and we are very much looking forward to the coming summer, when Lama Zopa Rinpoche will teach it to an international audience at the Maitreya Institute. Geshe-la continues to give lectures and courses in cities throughout Holland such as Amsterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, Tilburg, and Nijmegen, and study groups are being formed in some of these cities.

Maitreya Institute has also branched off into book publishing and distributing, and has published Dutch translations of Prince Siddhartha and How to Meditate; there are plans to publish one book a year. Importing and distributing books from Wisdom Publications, Snow Lion, Library of Tibetan Works & Archives, Tharpa and others and the sale of incense and Dharma-related objects have become increasingly important activities.

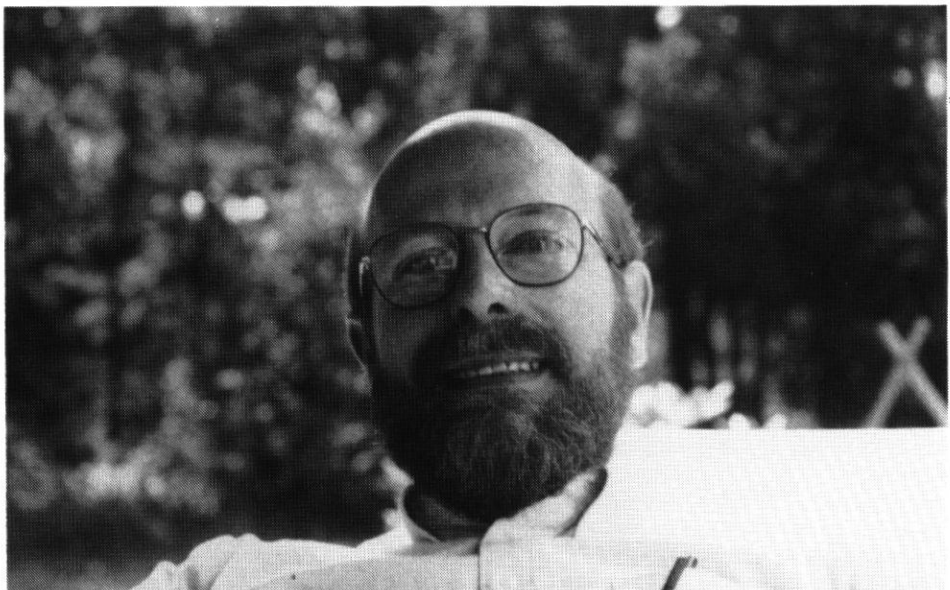
Maitreya Institute has been able to achieve a lot over the years, through the inspiration and with the guidance of our teachers, the hard work of a core of people, and the fresh energy of new students and residents. We hope to continue to develop, so that we can increasingly be of service to the people of the Netherlands and all other sentient beings.


Jan-Paul Kool

Geshe Konchog Lhundup


Jan-Paul Kool

Paula de Wijs-Koolkin


Lama Ösel Rinpoche

Jan-Paul Kool

About Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche

Nico van Beek

COMPILED BY LOUWRIEN WIJERS

Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche was born in Nepal in 1946. The name "Zopa" which he received means "patience". The incarnation of the scholar Lawudo Lama, the young Rinpoche was handed over to Lama Thubten Yeshe in India in 1960 to be trained by him. Together, they became the founders and spiritual leaders of the F.P.M.T., the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, to which the Maitreya Institute belongs. It was thus that Lama Zopa came to Holland for the first time in 1979, together with his teacher Lama Thubten Yeshe, and gave teachings at the Kosmos in Amsterdam.

In 1981 Lama Zopa and Lama Yeshe again came to Holland during August and September and, in the Maitreya Institute in Bruchem, first gave the Maitreya initiation to the many people who were present. For the next few days Lama Zopa taught the "Maitreya family" about karma. An Italian monk, Piero Cerri, who travelled with Lama Zopa and Lama Yeshe, said in a lecture he gave about Lama Zopa Rinpoche, "Lama Zopa is one of the extraordinary people who has a living experience of the Dharma and whose every word that is spoken is based on his own experience. He is someone who regards the other as more important than himself and is putting this into practice day and night. To meet such a person in this world is a very rare opportunity."

Some members of the Maitreya Institute had the opportunity to meet Lama Zopa in Europe during his 1983 world tour, when he visited England, Italy, France and Switzerland. Jan-Paul Kool, Margot Kool and I were privileged to be in Geneva, where he gave the teaching "Buddhism and the Adventure of the Mind" on the subject of practising patience by seeing your enemy as your most precious teacher. In Geneva we asked Lama Zopa for an interview, but he informed us that he "had nothing to say". Instead, he allowed Jacie Keeley, the ex-director of the F.P.M.T. Central Office, to tell us anecdotes from his youth. Also, an Australian monk, Neil Huston, who had accompanied Lama Zopa on his 1983 tour, told us about his experience with Lama Zopa during the five months that he lived very close to him. From their information the following profile of our beloved teacher Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche has been composed.

Jacie Keeley on Lama Zopa: "I have asked Rinpoche whether he wanted to talk with you, but he said that he had nothing to tell, Then I said that I knew at least three stories about him which were worth telling. The first one is about offering a bowl of potatoes to a group of Westerners in Nepal. It is a story about Guru devotion. The second story is about secretly leaving out texts when he was a little monk, and the third story is about the watch Lama Yeshe took from him. Rinpoche didn't mind if I told you these three stories.

The story about Guru devotion is as follows: When Rinpoche was a little boy, not a monk yet, maybe five years old, he was wearing a black chuba (a Tibetan coat-dress) full of holes and torn, and his trousers were full of fleas. He was in Solo Kumbu in Nepal, a beautiful evergreen valley lying between two high mountains, through which a big river rapidly

flows. On the other side of the river, a group of Westerners who had come with an expedition to Nepal was camping. Rinpoche was only a litle boy who owned nothing but a little bowl of potatoes. Actually these potatoes were not enough for one meal, but he wanted to offer them to the Westerners. He said to his uncle, who was also his teacher, that he wanted to offer his bowl of potatoes to the Westerners. His uncle said "No" and forbade him, but Rinpoche was determined; he would offer the potatoes, whatever his teacher said.

There was a long suspension bridge between the banks of the river. On the bridge, which was moving about, Rinpoche did his best to keep the potatoes in the bowl. While he was walking on the bridge, he saw the bridge moving about dangerously and below him he saw the water rapidly flowing under the moving bridge. At a certain point, as his mind was completely concentrated on the moving bridge and the rapidly flowing water, the potatoes rolled out of his bowl into the water and he rolled after them. His head went under water again and again, but the only thing he could think of was that this was a lesson in Guru devotion. Because he hadn't obeyed his teacher, he had fallen into the water. He wasn't afraid for a second, but he felt how he was ducked again and again and he thought to himself, 'This thing that is called Lawudo Lama is going to die now'. His head went under water and came up again for a few seconds, went under and came up again. Every time his head was up for a few seconds, he saw his teacher in the distance, who, in his long underwear, came running down very quickly from the house on the mountain. His teacher grabbed him by the collar of his chuba and pulled him out of the water, then made a fire on the bank of the river and sat for hours with him near the fire, so that he got warm again".

"This time", Jacie Keeley adds, "the uncle didn't punish Rinpoche at all, but there were other times that his uncle did punish him". Here follows the story about secretly leaving out texts, or the story about "subjugating the uncontrolled mind".

Jacie Keeley tells: "One day when Rinpoche was still very young, and probably had just become a monk, he was sitting in meditation posture with his looseleaf textbook on a little bench in front of him. The gompa (a small monastery) had received money for reading the most extended and most important textbook. So, Rinpoche also had been given a pile of textbooks and he had to read all the pages aloud. One moment the teacher went away. Rinpoche looked around him, saw that really nobody was there anymore, turned a great number of pages and went playing. He made plaits from the threads of the cloth on the little bench. He played with the spiders that were walking about. He played with the pen that was lying there. He thought that the teacher was far away, but the teacher was close by around the corner of the door and all this time, of course, he hadn't heard Rinpoche's voice. As the teacher came in again, he saw the pile of pages that had been turned over, took a long bamboo stick, and hit the ground right in front of Rinpoche. As a result, all the pages of his book were scattered. 'That wasn't unreasonable', found Rinpoche himself.

Another way the teacher subjugated Rinpoche's mind was to take him to the nettles and push his bare back into them. Still another way was to push his face almost in the pools in the courtyard of the gompa, but in such a way that his face just didn't get wet", related Jacie Keeley.

"The third story", she continues, "is about his watch. The watch this is all about, I have, so it still exists. As we left this spring from New Delhi, Rinpoche was wearing a very old watch, an enormous turnip from 1930 or 1920. Normally, we like it if lamas are wearing an elegant, light watch. So I said, Rinpoche, shall I buy you a nice watch?' Then Rinpoche told the story about that old watch. It was the watch his attendant had given him as Rinpoche left him to become a pupil of Lama Yeshe. The first thing Lama did was take away all his possessions. One of the things he had was the watch he had just received from his attendant. As Lama Yeshe took his watch, Rinpoche started to cry and he cried all day long. Lama Yeshe didn't know why he was crying. Lama thought that Rinpoche was crying because his attendant had had to leave him. Rinpoche cried and cried, but after a while he forgot the watch and there was no more talk about it.

Last year young Thubten Anchuk arrived to see Lama Yeshe. As he entered Lama Yeshe's room he was wearing a shining new watch, a beautiful, expensive watch. Lama Yeshe immediately took his watch, because children should not have things that are more beautiful than what others have. Thubten Anchuk accepted this and left the room. Then Rinpoche said to Lama Yeshe, 'I am really impressed by Anchuk' and told his own story about taking away his watch. All these years Lama Yeshe hadn't heard the true story about the watch. When Lama Yeshe finally understood that Rinpoche had cried that long because he had had to give away the watch that he had just received from his attendant, he said, 'You were so fond of your watch?' he went to a drawer, took the watch Rinpoche had cried so much for a long time ago and gave it back. Rinpoche then started to wear that watch again.

Still impressed by Thubten Anchuk, who hadn't shown a sign of agitation as his beautiful watch was taken away, Rinpoche talked about it with the cook of Kopan. Then the cook told him that Thubten Anchuk, after coming out of Lama Yeshe's room, had run to the kitchen and sobbed his heart out because of his watch".

Neil Huston on Lama Zopa:

After the three stories Jacie Keeley told about Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the Australian monk Neil Huston (Thubten Dhondrub), who travelled with Lama Zopa around the world from April to October 1982, said about him, "It is unbelievable how much Rinpoche does. This trip took five months and in every place where we have been, in Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Europe, an awful lot of people always want to talk with Rinpoche. There is never enough time to do the things people would like Rinpoche to do. He is always busy doing things for other people, checking things, doing meditations or pujas for others. Even if he can't receive the people personally, he is answering letters. And he is saying his own prayers, day and night, without stopping, as much as his body permits him. He always has his full attention on the Dharma. Even if he is relaxing and just talking, he is talking about Dharma".

"Does Rinpoche take time to sleep?", we ask.

"Oh yes, he sleeps", Neil Huston answers. He is human. At a given moment, he has to give way to his weariness. He is not going to sleep like us, by going to bed at a certain moment. He just falls over and sleeps. Sometimes he tells his dreams. They are really incredible. So it

is not that he tries not to sleep at all. But he definitely stays awake much more than people usually do".

"About what subject did Rinpoche talk most these five months?", we ask Neil Huston.

He answers, "The subject he stressed very much is practising patience. He has given unbelievable examples in what way your enemy in reality is your best friend. How you really have to value your enemy, because your enemy is the most important person in your life, because without your enemy you can't practise patience. And without practising patience, you can't develop and you never reach Enlightenment. He keeps stressing that if you're always with people who are kind to you, which we all want, in fact there is no progress. He makes this so clear!

The way he teaches you to practise patience if you're with him is by testing you, because he is very slow. You want to do things efficiently and in good order and he doesn't cooperate at all. He does everything in his own agreeable way, while it is enough to drive you crazy".

"Did you experience this as a personal teaching?", we ask.

"Definitely. I think he has different ways, it depends on who is with him, but I think he always tries to teach the same thing. I'm sure he used a special technique with me, but you don't know yourself what it is. Rinpoche is my root guru (most important teacher) and I have put all my trust in him. But I think it is not good to represent your root guru to others as completely perfect. It is my experience that you do not necessarily have to think that your Guru is Buddha in all situations".

"How long ago did you meet Lama Zopa Rinpoche?"

"In 1976. He was the first Tibetan lama I met, and it was the first teaching I received. I felt a certain contact immediately. It was such a strong feeling from the first moment on. Unbelievable. It is very complicated as well, because Rinpoche doesn't pretend in any way that he is perfect. He is all himself, completely relaxed, completely natural. He is always the same; he never thinks about himself. For example, you make a cup of tea for him and you have to constantly remind him that he has a cup of tea in front of him. It is always cold when he starts drinking it".

Andy Weber

Neil Huston continues, "I also find Rinpoche's teachings really incredibly good, in spite of his surprising way of acting that drives people to extremes. People take that from him, that is the strange thing about it. In a way it is a road to Calvary to sit and listen to him, but people stay. If you don't leave within an hour then I think you're stuck with him for the rest of your life. The surprising part of it is that if you are listening to him he can present a very stale subject in such a refreshing and clear and powerful way. He can really teach you how you should put something into practice, even if you can't do it the way he explained. Especially the subject of cherishing the enemy. That really is his subject now and in such a moment you decide intellectually to look for as many enemies as possible".

"What a subject to discuss in a time when everybody is preoccupied with peace", we remark.

"Yes, it is the most valuable subject you can deal with. He can really show you that it is terribly important, that in fact this is transforming your mind".

On October 2 1983, in Geneva, Lama Zopa gave a teaching about the great value the enemy has for us. From his teaching we will give a summary with some quotations, so that enthusiastic devotees of Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche can hear their teacher's own words.

Lama Zopa started in Geneva with the following:

"The happiness we want and the suffering we try to avoid come from the mind, not from somebody else's mind, but from our own mind. The secret is that we do not control our mind. We let our mind be influenced by disturbing thoughts. That is the whole problem in our daily life. If we do our best to get rid of the disturbing thoughts, then there is happiness.

What we have to put into practice is that we ourselves and other sentient

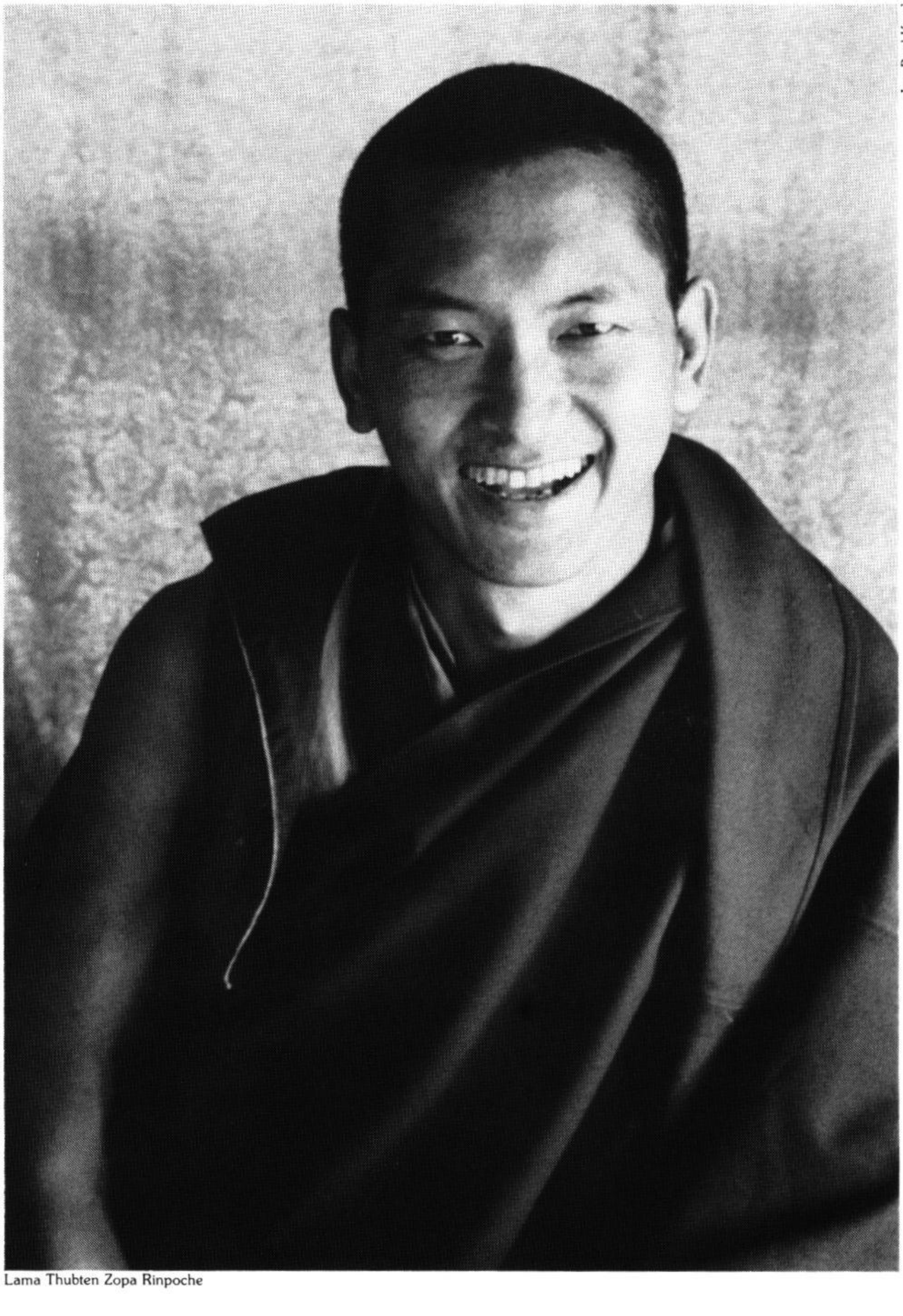
beings are exactly the same. That is very logical. It is clear if you investigate it, that all people are exactly the same. There is not the slightest reason that for me it is more important to gain happiness and avoid suffering than for others. So, because it is exactly the same for ourselves and for the other, the enemy, the person that bothers us, and because you need help from others and others need your help, it is unreasonable to harm others. That shows a poor mind.

Even with a couple, two people, if not both then one at least should practise equanimity. Then there is much more peace and harmony in the relationship. Equanimity is the point. We create our own misconceptions by deciding that we ourselves are more important than the enemy, the person that is bothering us. But the "I" that is more important than the others does not exist. That is hallucination. The origin of all depression, aggression, nervous breakdowns, etc. is the self-cherishing attitude. The stronger the self-cherishing attitude, the more problems a person has".

Lama Zopa then gave examples of the problems somebody with a self-cherishing attitude experiences. He says, "Such a person finds problems so easily. Such a person can even get angry because a bird is chirping outside, although this is a pleasant sound for others. If a dog is barking outside, this can make him angry. Wherever people like that are, everything is a problem, especially in relationships. If they are living together with somebody, they have a quarrel every five minutes. If they are outside in the garden, they quarrel. If they are inside they quarrel. In the dining room they quarrel. In the bedroom they quarrel. At breakfast they quarrel. Only if they are not together they don't quarrel.

As Buddha explained in his teachings, this is exactly what we always see happening. If at least one of the two people sacrifices himself for the happiness of the other, then there is much more peace and harmony in the relationship. From this we can see how incredibly important it is for our everyday mental peace to change our attitude and practise equanimity. We always have self-pity. By changing that into compassion for others, we get mental peace.

If others say bad things about you, you feel hurt. That is because of your self-cherishing attitude. In order to conquer this attitude, you have to see the attitude as your enemy. You constantly have to recollect the shortcomings of a self-cherishing attitude. Even if you practise the Buddha Dharma, if you do not conquer the self-cherishing attitude, what you are doing will never become the Buddha Dharma. Even if we are going to so many teachings by lamas, if we don't give up the self-cherishing attitude, we miss the most important point. All the Buddhas of the three times may appear before you and give teachings many hundreds of eons on end, but if you don't change your self-cherishing attitude the teachings of all Buddhas won't



Jan-Paul Kool

Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche

help. Even if we met Jesus and he taught us, if we didn't change our egoistic attitude, nothing would happen. Even if you have taken the Pratimoksha vows and the Bodhisattva vows and the Tantric vows, they all have no use if you don't change your self-cherishing attitude.

To pursue your own happiness not only totally interferes with your temporal happiness, but also with the ultimate happiness. It totally interferes with the realizations of the omniscient mind. A selfish attitude is so harmful for all sentient beings. If your realizations do not pervade you, you cannot be a good guide for all sentient beings. You can't keep them from suffering and show them the way to happiness. With a self-cherishing attitude, you cause others harm.

So, you see how incredibly important it is, even if you don't believe in reincarnation, to watch your happiness in everyday life. From your childhood on, you go to school, primary school, secondary school, vocational training or university, and you learn many languages and subjects just to be happy in everyday life. We spend much time and energy to gain prosperity and a good reputation, but to change our attitude is in fact the first thing we should do to be happy in everyday life".

Then Lama Zopa gave examples of the value the enemy has for us, continuing, "If you practise patience regarding your enemy, as long as you still have an enemy, mental peace will arise. After thirty, forty, fifty years of study, even after a whole life of study, there is still no peace of mind. The happiness of mental peace can only be given to you by your enemy. By practising patience, kindness and compassion regarding the person that is bothering you, your anger gets less. As a result, next year it will be harder to get angry and stay angry for a long time than this year. With people who are your friends you can't practise compassion, but you can with respect to your enemy. After thirty, forty, fifty years of study, which costs a lot of money, millions of guilders are spent on education, there is still no mental peace. It can even be that you have much less mental peace than in your childhood, when you hadn't had any education yet. If we stay friendly to the person who is bothering us in everyday life, somebody in the office or at home, if we practise patience with respect to him or her, then immediately there is an incredible peace in us. If somebody isn't angry at you and doesn't harm you, then there is no opportunity to practise patience and you don't experience this mental peace. So it is incredibly kind of the enemy to be angry at you, because your mental peace develops through it.

So you see that the mental peace that you don't have even after years of studies which cost millions of guilders, you get in one minute from the enemy. What's more, the mental peace you get from the enemy costs not a cent. For this enormous peace that you get in one minute from controlling your anger, you don't have to spend a cent.

As it is said in the eight verses of the Kadampa teachings, looking to the enemy whose anger is directed towards you is like looking to a valuable friend who is helping you to practise patience. Because of this, you are able to stop all confusion, to have all realizations, and to reach omniscience with which you can show the path to happiness to all sentient beings without any difficulty. That advantage is offered to you by your enemy; you owe your enlightenment to your enemy".

Lama Zopa ended his teaching by stressing the simple way in which we can bring about our own happiness and the happiness of others. He said, "If you practise patience, you'll reach Enlightenment. Even if somebody gave you a million guilders, even if he gave you all the diamonds in the world, you couldn't experience these relizations. All living beings, in the air, in the water, in the woods, are all always busy because they want to experience happiness. All human beings in the cities, in the villages, in space and in the sea are all busy because they want to experience happiness. But we have seen that practising patience, kindness, and compassion is the first thing we have to do in order to experience this.

For mental peace we don't have to make far journeys. We don't have to spend enormous sums of money to look for our enemy with whom we can practise patience. We don't have to go to the travel agency to book a trip to our enemy. Your enemy is constantly very near, in your house, in your family, in your office. He is always very near. You don't have to spend millions of guilders to find him. Your enemy is so kind to come to you. You have a precious treasure nearby.

If we can practise kindness, patience, and bodhicitta for our biggest enemy, then it is easy to behave in the same way towards all sentient beings. In this way you can stay at home and develop your mind. You can have happiness with your family, your parents, your partner. Even if you are living on your own there is happiness, because you efface yourself and regard others as more important. Even if you are living in the city, even if you are living in the mountains, even if you are going to the office, there is never anybody you should be afraid of. Wherever you are, you experience happiness. This not only makes you happy, but also the people around you. Even if it is not your intention to have a good reputation, you get a good reputation through your kindness. Even if you don't ask for help, people will give you help. And there is not only happiness in this life, but also in future lives there is much more happiness.

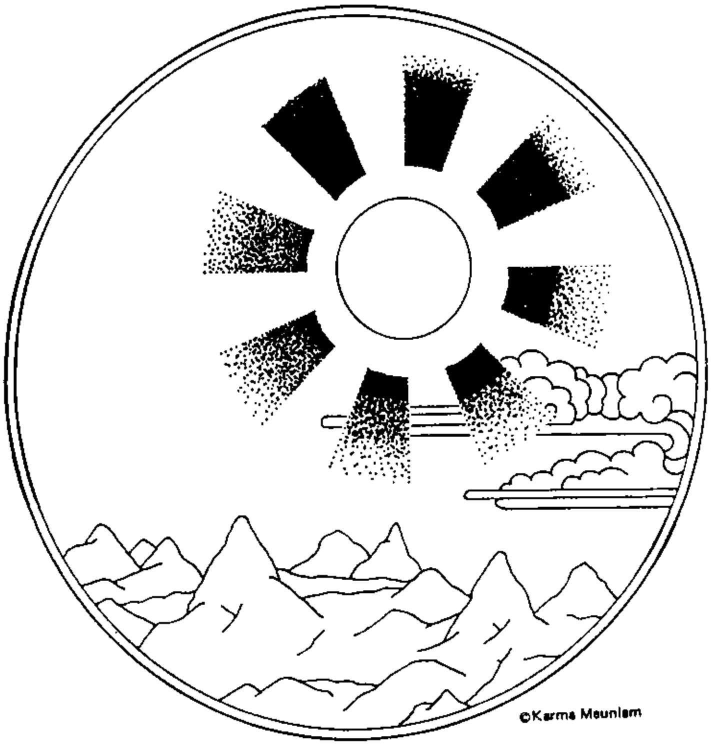
To be kind every day for all sentient beings is incredibly important. If you're going to your job, you have to think about the kindness of your employer who has given you the job, even if you get money for it. That attitude is important. One wrong way of thinking and you get into problems. One good way of thinking and there is calmness, peace, and harmony.

With everything you do, you think, 'The reason I was born a human being is to serve others, to eliminate the suffering of other sentient beings and to give them happiness. I'm going to use myself for others, that's why I am wearing these clothes, that's why I am eating this food, that's why I am sleeping'.

If you are looking at objects, look at them with bodhicitta; this is what one of the teachers of the Dalai Lama teaches. If you eat, eat with bodhicitta. If you talk, talk with bodhicitta. If you investigate something, investigate with bodhicitta. Think as much as possible about the happiness of others. If somebody is angry with you, think that this person himself doesn't have any freedom at all. He is totally occupied by anger, like a lunatic is possessed by a spirit. Think how pitiable such a person is, because he isn't a practitioner of compassion. That alone is already enough reason to feel compassion for the one who is your enemy".

Translated from Dutch into English by Edward Teunissen

Lama Yeshe's big vision



THIS ARTICLE ON LAMA YESHE'S "BIG VISION" IS ABOUT THE INTEGRATION OF DHARMA INTO WESTERN SOCIETY. IT WAS COMPILED BY PAULA DE WIJS-KOOLKIN AND MARGOT KOOL-STUMPEL FROM A MEETING WITH LAMA YESHE AND FROM COMMENTES LAMA YESHE HAD GIVEN ON THIS SUBJECT. THEIR ESSAY BEGINS WITH AN INTRODUCTION.

Each of us has our own personality and our own way of doing things, but it seems that we do not expect this to be true for those who are "more realized", such as the Tibetan teachers or lamas. This may at times surprise us, as there are many lamas who give the same Dharma teachings, and each will do it in his own way. Just like ordinary people, some teachers are humorous, some are serious, others are lively. Some are calm and composed and some are traditional, whereas others have taken on a Western style. Because of this rich variation in approaches, many different people can practise the Buddha-Dharma, each working in a manner that suits him and with a teacher whose ideas and methods connect with his own.

The students who joined to gether to form the Maitreya Institute were initially inspired by Lama Yeshe and his "Big Vision". This was a vision of Tibetan Buddhism being practised in the West without turning into an exotic or extreme subculture, whose essence would be lost by Westerners. Lama Yeshe advised us to follow a middle way, and continually surprised us with his understanding of the circumstances we have to deal with.

CULTURE

We have made the following summary of Lama Yeshe's guidance concerning how to integrate the essence of wisdom into our own culture.

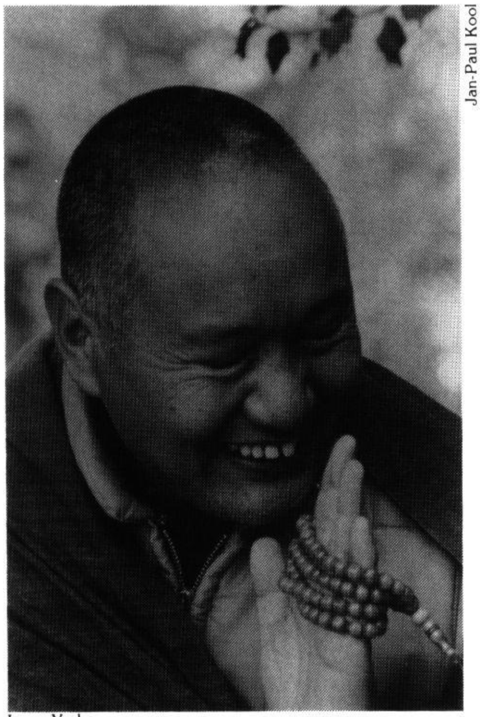
"The method of bringing the Dharma to the West is to bring the Dharma itself, rather than the Tibetan culture. We cannot do everything in a Tibetan manner because it is too time-consuming and because many of the cultural and historical elements are not important.

Even 2500 years ago, Buddha Sakyamuni understood life in the 20th century; this is why he presented a rapid way of developing oneself. My feelings are that if the time changes, then the culture, the mentality, the behaviour, and even the environment change. Therefore, the presentation and method of teaching must also change. We cannot use a slow method if we are living a fast-paced lifestyle. Buddha Sakyamuni himself said that the Vinaya rules must change when the culture changes, because what was useful earlier often becomes a hindrance later.

What we normally understand as the meaning of "culture" is the relative mind or spirit, the collective illusions of a certain land and people. It actually has nothing to do with the wisdom truth of the Dharma. If we stretch the meaning, we could say that Dharma is the "culture" of our progressively developing wisdom, but normally the word is not used in this way. I was brought up in a great culture that is 2000 years old. Now I am working with Westerners and I think the meeting between East and West is on the gross level, but could be progressively worked towards a finer level of understanding. I think we must work towards a wisdom culture.

The wisdom of the Dharma is no one's culture. It is not a western culture and will never become one, nor is it the samsaric Tibetan culture. We do not give you any teachings in this. The Tibetan as well as the Western culture is samsaric and our interest certainly doesn't lie in seeing how one culture can be exchanged for another.

The Dharma teaches us methods for gaining internal insight, an insight that is much deeper than the superficial level of our illusions. Naturally you cannot immediately distinguish what is culture and what is not. Take the practical viewpoint from the Dharma and give that a new form, a voice of expression that grows with the culture. Because we have a wi-



Lama Yeshe

de view, an open mind, we can accept another form. It makes no difference to us.

So, to bring the Dharma to you we have to have a wider view, to blend it into the context of another culture. If the essence of universal instruction is understood and practiced, it is much stronger than a cultural routine you have been born into.

The essence of the West and the East are the same, but the behaviour is different, so the relation is different. There is a certain way of communicating with your own culture, with your own people. A Western student can do certain things better than a Tibetan monk who is coming from a very different culture. I am convinced that we have to do certain things according to the habits of the land. Our centre is called "Center for Wisdom Culture" for this reason, that a complete culture is taught, from childhood to adulthood.

EDUCATION

We have taken this next piece from a question/answer discussion with Lama Yeshe on the development of a universal system. Through Lama Yeshe's initiative, the Universal Education System was begun.

Question: Could you explain what the goal is of Universal Education and in which way is it universal?

Lama Yeshe: In the first place, we need a new education for the whole world, because the present day education is not up to date for the intelligent people of this time. The existing education causes many conflicts and much dissatisfaction for the next generation. The reason why it is called universal is because the total human reality is something universal and something that all people should understand. Now, many people in the world do not understand the totality of human reality. They don't understand their own totality, do you understand? They don't want to accept spirituality, and if they do accept spirituality, then they accept the scientific reality, and nothing more. I see this conflict in the Western world. This is very common. So I propose that there must be a middle way. If you are educated spiritually as well as scientifically, then both will be understood. The people have to be able to protect themselves spiritually as wel as bodily, in order to be in a position to free themselves from any spiritual or bodily problem.

So what I mean with what is necessary in education is the following. At the moment, there is much knowledge about wisdom, but the presentation is too limited. It is presented to the student of the world in a certain dogmatic way. Therein lies the conflict. In other words, the reflection is a dualistic reflection. I feel we must eliminate these conflicts by using other words, other terminology. Do you understand? Let's say, we could teach the whole Lam Rim and also the Tantra, without using one Buddhist term. I think I can do that. You can too. Then it doesn't cause self-restriction. If you eliminate that, then a kind of free being comes forth. To understand your own psychology, your own physical reality, that's what I call "universal education".

I have already said that we have this quality of universal education in Buddhism, but I want it to be cast in a new form. The words in Buddhist terminology should be taken out; don't use any religious Sanskrit terms like Nirvana. Use simple scientific language that doesn't reflect a religious picture, a common neutral explanation. Not so? Do you understand what I mean? Yes? I tell you, keep it simple, because we are all projecting in such a restricted manner, such a limited level. We have to avoid this, because to make a new proposal, to have a wider vision, we must avoid old concepts, words, and forms.

In my view, Buddhism takes on the universe, and we have instruction that gives the universal reality. So this has to take on a new form, it needs a language and it needs to take on a universal image. This is important. Then we have something to contribute. The sources for this are our students. You should make this clear to them. That's why I said that universal education is the training from childhood up to the moment that you die, the next life and the life after that.

That's why I say you should begin gradually. While working on a project, you cannot hurry. You cannot work alone from an intellectual approach. You have to be very realistic. You have to begin somewhere, with something for the children, so that a deep understanding of man's existence can be turned into a simple language. You make ABC books. Do you see? This is where the students, our sources, work on this to a certain high level. I believe if they become interested, then they could do that. It takes time, but slowly they will come to realize this. Then they will see the profit. I think this is a large project that will take a long time. Many generations will pass before it's ready. The childeren's education is for us no longer necessary. We're too old for that. But we should think about the new children, the babies who are still in their mother's wombs. We should give some thought to this enormous responsibilty. Don't think that there won't be any more children because the atom bomb will destroy them. This is not true. Don't worry. The future will come.

Question: How can we be sure that in the process of integrating Dharma into Western education, the essence of Dharma won't be lost?

Lama Yeshe: For that you need people with a good understanding of the Dharma, people who can work on the universal education project. Simply, you need incredible ability. I'll say it again. If we talk about a new education, then it doesn't mean that we have to give up the old completely. We can use the old education. But from the old education we take out words that are dull and form misunderstandings. We take these things out and give them a new form. We give them more flavour and a deeper understanding of human nature. That's why universal education doesn't mean giving up mathematics. We are offering educational instruction and to throw these things out would be nonsense. They have significance and, such as it is, the Western education has some benefits. But it has to have more flavour, more completeness, and a deeper sense of meaning. Every subject has another totality where method and wisdom are re-

presented. If we talk about a subject, then there are always two things that go hand in hand and these are method and wisdom. Every energy contains method and wisdom, mutually dependent.

MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are problematic because we have expectations. Expectations are dreams and dreams are not reality. We don't expect chocolate from the Buddha, because that's not what he is for. What do we expect from others? What do couples expect from each other or others who are constantly together? In togetherness it is inevitable that there will be a clash now and then. This is necessary to maintain a relationship. If one of the two purposely behaves as a nuisance, there does not need to be a problem if the other has made knowledge of Dharma-Wisdom his own. Difficulties can lead to a mutual benefit if they are turned into Dharma. Although kindness is very important, you don't always learn from being sweet to everyone or by saying to everyone. "I love you, I shall be nice to you". Perhaps they are doing this because they want something favourable, or need protection and they're hiding to feel safe. If you make yourself dependent on others in this way, you will never know nor develop your own possibilities.

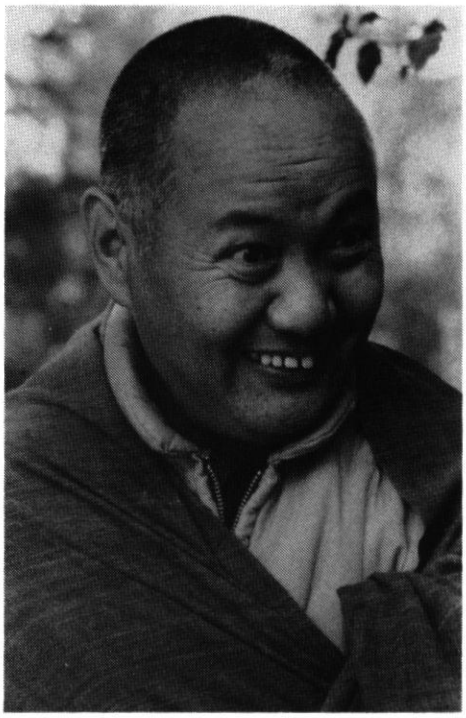
I think that women have to understand that men also have problems and men have to understand that women's menstrual period makes them upset. This is scientifically proven. This is because the body comes under pressure. Men also have problems, but of another kind. Is this not true? Maybe men's problems are more simple. That depends on the man. But sometimes it is very difficult for women to concentrate due to the energy loss during menstruation. If you experience this, then you cannot concentrate so well, can you? No, I don't think so. That's common knowledge. But if you look to Tara, this changes things, because she can block the energy. She has control over the loss of energy. Women can learn this. For sure, you can learn it. I think that the beauty of the human being comes from the human mind, that you have the inner ability and intelligence to bring the body under control.

All men have the feminine dakini energy in them. There are many different levels of dakinis inside yourself. That's why Dorje Chang holds a woman, because the highest quality of male and female exists in yourself. It's not the physical meeting of a man and a woman, it's the symbol for the inner unity.

Another thing that always strikes me is that where there are women, there's certain kind of prevailing energy. Whereever there are men, there is another kind of prevailing energy. Sometimes when I see women with babies and there is no father, then I think, it seems to me they are missing something. The children are not healthy, the women are not healthy and the mothers experience the children as an extremely difficult task. Being together has something, a unity. Also on a relative level, it has an influcence on your life.

There are women who give their energy instead of taking it. These must be women who have developed Bodhicitta, who have an understanding of the inner energy and how to handle it, and who can use this on the path to enlightenment.

Marpa, for instance, was a layman who led a normal life. But he was a complete Buddha. He had a wife. It's not very often that a man and woman don't come together for the physical relationship, but chiefly to help each other and to give another direction to the energy in order to promote each others growth. Normally the samsaric minds grasp to each other and expect to receive a samsaric happiness. Today they are happy, tomorrow they fight because I didn't get my chocolate from him. That is then a lower form of communication. Then we are not communicating from all of our chakras, but only from the lower chakras, not true? I think that's it. In this way it has a very poor quality. Take for instance the women in the West today. When I was in California last year, I saw an advertisement that was produced by women. It stated something like, women should not be used, that women are not only for sex. Something like that. People project that, so the women feel it. The women say this is not correct. We are not here for men's sex, we are human beings. This is certainly so, men should not consider women only for the use of their bodies. A woman has all the capabilities of a human being and is in a position to become a Buddha. Then the idea is certainly true that men are looking toward women in a rather animal-like way. Men are now finding it difficult. It has now become very difficult in the West,



for instead of women being pleasurable for men, they have become the source of problems."

PART II

The word "sangha" is Sanskrit and means the practicing community, those who follow the Buddha's path and practice his teachings. Sometimes it refers to everyone who tries to do this, but more often it refers to those who have taken a refuge apart from wordly life, monks and nuns.

In the East, this Buddhist monastic tradition has existed since the time of the Buddha, while we in the West have really not grown up with this. We often don't know what sort of attitude to have towards a Western Buddhist monk or nun and of course this also happens the other way around. Lama Yeshe considered the Western sangha very important for bringing the Dharma to the West.

The following questions and answers are from a conversation with a few Western sangha members.

Question: What is the relationship the sangha and the lay community should have to be mutual advantageous?

Lama Thubten Yeshe: I think it's very easy. For instance, the sangha can accept the task from lay people who have been leading meditations. The lay community and the sangha are responsible for each other. What is important is that there is a proper understanding of each other's human rights and individual needs.

You know, instead of saying a monk is this or that, or to say that it is an ego-trip,

lay people should understand why someone has become a monk or nun, to understand what it means to become a monk and what a monk's vows are. What he does is enormous, it's something a lay person cannot do. Do you understand? So respect someone who can dot that. Yes, it is true, lay people cannot lead the life of a monk or nun. They wouldn't be able to hold out, they have chosen something else. The sangha tries it, that is good enough. At least they are trying.

If a monk or nun is not upholding his vows, then the lay people should say, "You know better, why aren't you doing it better than us? Why have you become a monk or nun?" Then it's good to criticise them. We know it, as we have studied the Lam Rim and the Vinaya. We have to live in a certain way, otherwise we become ashamed. If lay people criticise like this, then they are right. But they have to, one way or the other, take responsibility for the monks and nuns. They work hard and should receive as much support and cooperation as possible. Not so? At the same time, monks should not have an egotistic attitude and think that lay people are less in value. If they talk like this then they are on an ego-trip. I think that monks and nuns sometimes have the wrong ideas, just as lay people do. But what we as the sangha try to do is to keep the wrong ideas a little bit under control and not let them manifest. They are going to manifest, but we try not to let that happen. Let the people understand that. We have to understand and respect each other. I think this is necessary.

I will say once again that I think monks and nuns are a good investment for the completion of bringing the Dharma to the West in the future. Because the Dharma is something you have to live. Dharma is so great, so universal. You have to live it, then you are Dharma and you can bring the meaning, the essence of it to the West. If you don't live it, if it only stays philosphical or intellectual, then you can't do that. Without intensive meditation practice and the leading of a Dharmic life, it is impossible to bring the Dharma to the West. We are lucky that, in our society, we have monks and nuns who are inwardly busy. We must take care of them, they are our investment. You already know we do not have enough teachers. We always have a shortage of teachers, and we cannot always count on people from the East. We have to be self-sufficient and the way to do that is to take care that the sangha receives a thorough and complete instruction. They must transform into professionals. For that they need our support. They must work harder than the lay people. They receive more pressure instead of rest. They have to study and have devotion in order to learn how they can help others in every situation. They are not consecrated for an excuse to live a lazy life. From their side, they have to be practical and willing to take on difficulties. The lay people from their side must have understanding.

The sangha must have a devoted attitude in order to help in whatever situation they are in, without contriving something like, "I am so pure, I cannot do the dishes". That's not pure, that's lazy. That's why I have told our sangha community that we must not expect the laypeople to support us because we are so pure. We must be self-sufficient, this is the 20th century. We can do everything we want. We can look after ourselves physically and mentally. We are responsible.

Question: Can you say something about the value of the monastic community and the survival of the tradition of monastic life in the 20th century?

Lama Thubten Yeshe: Very useful, very servicable. People have the misunderstanding that a monk's life must be the same as what exists in some of the Christian monasteries. Christian monks stay in the monastery until they die, they never come out into society. I don't believe that this is the Buddhist view of monastic life. Buddha's standpoint is that you stay in the monastery as long as it's necessary to keep your ordination and to become healthy. When you're strong enough, have been properly instructed and you are free from confusion, then you must go out to give lessons and become involved in society. So I don't see that monastic life means that you go into a monastery and stay there until you die. That's not the idea.

Question: Do you have any advice for those considering ordination?

Lama Thubten Yeshe: Oh yes. My experience is that it's a good idea to know beforehand, to understand just what it means to become a monk or nun. People need definite instruction before being initiated. To be a monk or nun is only just an idea. One must lead the life of a monk or nun and that's different. At present I try to have the interested party first taken the five vows. Then they gain some experience and if they can keep these, then they can take the eight vows. If they can maintain these vows, then they can live in what we call "unattached ordination". They live then as a monk or nun. You listen to the teacher and you follow instructions on how to lead your life. Christians call this obedience. You must listen, you live it immediately and you look to what things are important in life other than your daily bread. There are, for instance, ethics. In this period you stay in a monastery as a monk or nun and you behave as a monk or nun and not as a lay person. Desire, wanting to wear other clothes, and wanting to do other things, these three things you have to become aware of. Then you stay in a monastery until you have reached a stage where you feel comfortable with that. Then you can take the 36 vows. If you can keep these, then slowly you take the gelong initiation or the full monk's initiation. This way it goes much better. A slow process of events instead of suddenly jumping in without any experience, and naturally I advise you to stay within a monastic environment. I can tell you, living in a monastery is for monks and nuns. It's the same as if you are a fish, then it's best to stay in the sea, for that's where you find all that you need. If you are out of the ocean, then you would die. It's exactly the same. It is really wonderful for a monk or nun to live in a monastic community. If you truly live up to the ethics, then you will be very happy in a monastery. Monastery rules are composed out of compassion and the ethics make you calm and peaceful. I agree with you completely. A monk or nun who is not living in a monastery, in the 20th century, will find it very difficult to survive.

In a meeting of the Council for the Preservation of Mahayana Tradition, which was held in Italy, a session was devoted to Lama's vision. Those present who had an understanding of this vision, spoke about it. Here follows a few pieces from that session.

Merry, a nun in the Dorje Pamo monastery in France: "Lama's vision is a universal, mutually dependent divided responsibility. It works for all centres in every land. Lama's mandala is worldwide, complete, and every individual center is part of it. Just as we need all our limbs to have a functioning body, the

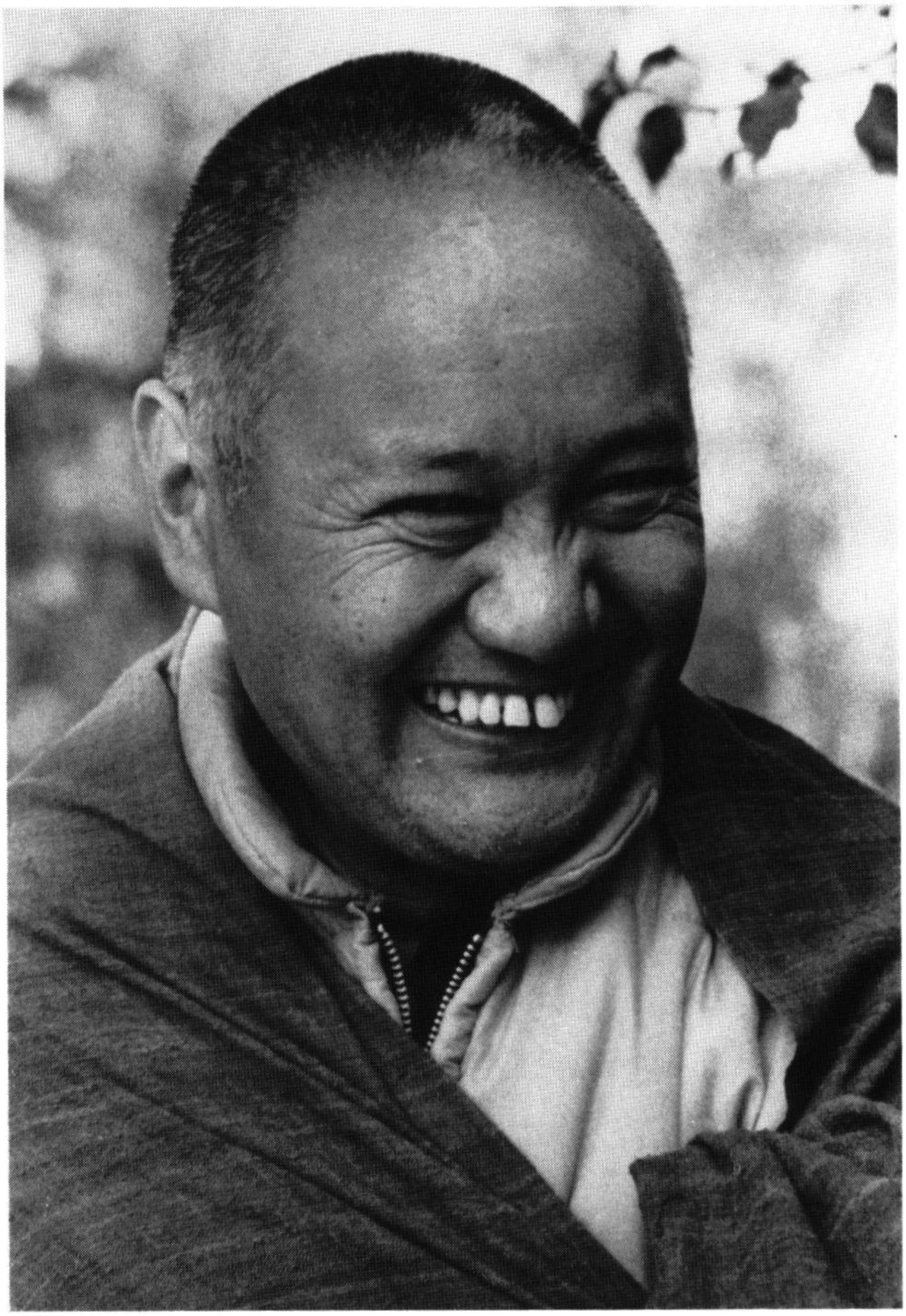
limbs of the mandala are teachers, lay people, monks, nuns, educators, and students."

Franco, a silversmith connected with the Lama Tsong Khapa Institute in Italy: "Lama's vision is the vision of the Buddha. His efficient qualities put him in a position to help who live in confusion. He uncovers their qualities and goodness, lays them naked and lets them work with that for the sake of all. He begins with how the person is and not how he should be."

Connie, a nun and one of the founders of Universal Education: "The way Lama has established the organization is much like the traditional way the Dharma is taught. Although we might not be ready for them, we can receive the beginning, middle and end all at the same time, just like getting all the levels of an organization off the ground."

Basili (who takes care of Lama Ösel Rinpoche): "Lama's main issue was to change our lives into Dharma, all our knowledge, values, and activities to be applied to Dharma action. Just as individuals practice Tong-Len, the practice of giving happiness and taking unhappiness from others, so can Lama Yeshe's organisation be seen from a world view. We create the circumstances for others to meet the Dharma and we give what we can from our own life for our Dharma practice. It's just like the tantric vision where everything in our daily life is used on the path to enlightenment. We try to make people happy in whatever way we can. Openness is the key to Lama's vision."

Rosario, the former gardener at Tsong Khapa Institute in Italy: "I once asked how long the centre will exist and Lama answered, "Until Buddha Maitreya comes". At that moment, I began to understand Lama's vision. This opened my mind. The best way is to lay the base for Lama's vision and at the same time, to stay active in preparing for our own enlightenment. In the centre, others have the opportunity to live close to the lessons, to study and go into retreat. This helps the centre grow, to give more and to go farther. The centre also carries the weight of bringing up the children, of making them into "new" men and women for this world, which means divided responsibility to become complete and developed adults."



Roy, the ex-director of the Dorje Chang Institute in New Zealand: "We have come into contact with the Dharma because we searched for answers to solve the problems in our lives. We will not give up our rejecting attitude until we have found something we can't defeat. Lama encourages us to introduce a healing energy into society so that, in the future, people will be able to find within our society, the path to enlightenment."

Denis, the director of the Vajrayogini Institute in France: "There is the danger that Lama's vision becomes too concrete. Lama's vision had in reality no rules or boundaries. Lama simply handled every moment and every situation with wisdom and the Mahayana mind. Lama's method was to handle and control every situation at the very moment and not to wait to take care of it."

Dr. Adrian Feldman, monk and ex-director of the Nalanda monastery in France, added to this, "In regards to the individual, Lama always taught that method and wisdom should be integrated with all activity."

Sylvia, ex-director of the Arya Tara Institute in West Germany: "Lama's vision cuts through culture, religion, nationality, identity, and concepts. Every method he used was to help us do this. Lama always created the room where we could discover our own Buddha-nature. Our work in the organization is to give this room to others."

Written by: Paula de Wijs-Koolkin and Margot Kool-Stumpel

Translated from Dutch to English by Karmen Burrage

Christa Meindersma

Mönlam Chenmo in Tibet

For the second time since 1959, when the Tibetans rose up against the Chinese and the Dalai Lama escaped to India, a great prayer feast, the Monlam Chenmo, was celebrated in Lhasa in 1987. Under strict supervision from the Chinese and Tibetan police, the stately ceremonies lasted seven days. Held in and around the Jokhang, one of the oldest and most important temples in Lhasa, the ceremonies began on the Tsebachonga, the first full moon of the Fire-Hare year.

The Monlam Chenmo was originally begun by Je Tsong Khapa, and, before 1959, was celebrated every year directly after Losar, the Tibetan New year. Losar's New Year's Eve begins with the serving of the traditional soup called thukpa, and with a ritual to drive all negativity out of the houses. A burning bush of wheat is carried through each house and this, along with any old garbage, is gathered for enormous bonfires in the streets. The first week of Losar is a great social event that takes place mainly in the houses. New ceremonial flag masts are hoisted, and the prayer flags are renewed around the Jokhang temple as well as over the homes.

This year, during the second week of the New Year celebration, approximately 2000 monks and lamas gathered from the great monasteries of Drepung, Sera and Ganden. Small temples that had been destroyed and were still empty or were being used for storage, were transformed into sleeping quarters. In the early morning of the first day of the second week, while the moon still hung over the rocky ridge behind the Potala and the first rays of sun touched the rooftops of the temple, the streets below began to fill with monks. Hidden beneath their capes, a yellow shawl draped over their heads, they made their way to the Potala. Hours before, rows of spectators from Lhasa and the villages nearby and pilgrims from Kham, Amdo and Kongo, had gathered around the square on the south side of the Jokhang. Everyone was dressed in a traditional Tibetan costume, making the festival a colourful spectacle. Police kept everyone in their places as the square slowly filled with monks.

The monks' red robes fluttered in the wind as three prostrations were made before all settled into calmness. The platform, where traditionally the important lamas take their places under the Dalai Lama, had been freshly painted. There the monks would later take an examina-

tion under the high lamas and, if they passed, they would receive the title "Geshe". The atmosphere is generally cheerful and playful during these debating sessions on serious religious topics. Sometimes during the debating, the discussions become heated with screaming and laughing, and at times ten monks are needed to carry someone away from a overly heated debate. During the debate, offerings are gathered and rolled into katas to be thrown onto the podium.

In an instant, the whole scene changed as the Ganden Lama came out of the Jokhang, mounted the podium, and began to sing a deep full note that resonated through all who listended. The Barkor, the market street around the Jokhang, was filled with spectators. On the side of the temple, long rows of people carrying katas, incense, and thermoses of buttered tea, stood in line waiting to go in. The ceremonies that took place in the afternoon, in the square inside the Jokhang, could only be attended by monks and lamas, and was observed by the monks's and lama's sponsors, who watched from the rooftop of the Jokhang. Others shuffled through the temple and so could still be part of the Monlam Chenmo. The Chinese press, from the roof of the Jokhang, filmed the ceremonies. At a meeting for tourists inside one of the hotels, a Chinese official dressed in a traditional chupa, gave commentaries on the festival. After this, the tourists were taken by a Chinese guide to a selected spot on the roof of the Jokhang. We can easily question the motivation behind permitting the Monlam Chenmo to take place when just the tourists and sponsors are allowed to participate with the monks, and not the rest of the Tibetan people.

After a meal of tea, tsampa (ground barley), and butter, the ceremonies began once more, and would last until evening. Thousands of butter lamps were burning, and before the many altars, pujas and prayers were being offered. More teachings followed, broken only by the beautiful singing voice of the Ganden Lama. After a few minutes of silence and a cup of tea, the square in front of the Jokhang became red as the monks took a short break. Later, inside the Jokhang, they organized themselves in long rows and began the next puja. The sponsors walked in a long procession between the rows, carrying burning incense toward the Ganden Lama, where they placed katas at his feet.

Outside the Barkor, pilgrims walked everywhere, doing prostrations before and around the Jokhang. As the darkness of evening set in, the monks left the temple. Along with the warm religious

atmosphere, tension hung in the air. Police were posted at all the entrances to the temple, deciding who could enter, and watching as the pilgrims made their prostrations. Undercover police also walked around the Jokhang, watching and listening to what was being said and done. It is important to note that all the money donated during the Monlam Chenmo disappeared directly into the hands of the Chinese government, and the films and photos that were taken were later used as media propaganda, to show how happy the Tibetans are under Chinese rule.

Losar and Monlam Chenmo came to a climax on the night of the first full moon of the new year. In late afternoon, as the sun's rays turned a soft gold, the square before the Jokhang and the Barkor were evacuated. On the north, east, south and west sides of the Jokhang, butter sculptures the size of houses had been placed, enormous offerings moulded from butter and painted in brightly coloured flowers and animal figures. As dusk turned to dark, the Jokhang became an incredible sight, with the enormous butter sculptures, the monks sitting before them on the ground, singing, the sound of the horns, flutes and drums, and the full moon directly overhead. People tried to make their way through the crowds around the Jokhang, but the mass of people in the narrow street was suffocating, and care was necessary to avoid falling down and being trampled. Once around the Jokhang, everyone was led via a sidestreet to the Lingkor, a long path around Lhasa. A ring of people danced in the square under the full

moon, high in the clear sky. An old Amala (Tibetan word for mother) took me by the arm and asked, "Do you know what everyone is praying for? That His Holiness should please come back to Lhasa." On the television in the square, a woman prayed for the long life and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Early next morning, the sculpture of the Champa Buddha was put on a truck and ridden around the Jokhang, led by rows of monks with drums and flutes, and surrounded by swarms of people. By the light of the first rays of the sun, the truck returned to the Jokhang, laden with katas. The festival ended with a horseriding competition and a running competition from the Potala to the Jokhang. Religion and wordly enjoyment seemed to blend so easily together in the life of the Tibetan people. Thus, for the second time in thirty years, were they able to receive the blessing of celebrating the Monlam Chenmo.

Written by Christa Meindersma.

Translated from Dutch to English by Karmen Burrage.

Tibetan astrology and astronomy

THE FOLLOWING IS AN EDITED TRANSCRIPT OF A LECTURE GIVEN BY DR. A. BERZIN AT THE MAITREYA INSTITUTE ON MAY 2 1985.

Dr. Alex Berzin

One of the traditional sciences studied in Tibet, known literally as stellar or star calculation, is a field of study that includes mathematics, astrology and astronomy. It describes the calculations that are used for determining the motions of the planets and their positions in the heavens, and the calculations used for making the calendar and predicting eclipses. It also includes the astrological calculations used for personal horoscopes and for the information found in the Tibetan almanac, pertaining to which days and times of day are auspicious or inauspicious for starting various activities such as the planting of crops.

There are two divisions of this astrological material, translated literally as white calculations and black calculations, and referring to the calculations followed in India and China. These Tibetan names for India and China are derived from the predominant colour of the clothing worn by the people there. Thus, India is the land in which the people wore mainly white clothing, and China is the land in which people wore mainly black clothing.

The Indian material comes primarily from the Kalachakra, or Cycles of Time, Tantra. In this tantra, the Buddha presents a system of external, internal, or alternative cycles of time. The external cycles of time deal with the motions of the planets through the heavens and various cycles or divisions of time in terms of years, months and days, or, in other words, the calendar. The internal cycles of time deal with the cycles of the energied and the breaths throughout the body, which follow parallel types of cycles to those of the external world. In addition, there are the alternative cycles of time, or the various meditative practices of Kalachakra. These practices are used to gain control over the various cycles so that one can centralize the energies of the body in order to realise one's fullest potential, one's own enlightenment, in order to benefit everyone. In connection with the discussion of the external cycle of time, the root material of the Kalachakra Tantra presents the source of all the calculations and interpretations used for determining the position of the planets, sun, and moon and for making the calendar. This Kalachakra material also includes information for determining the auspiciousness of various activities, according to the planetery aspects, and contains the text know as "Arising from the Vowels", which correlates the characteristics of Sanskrit alphabet and phonemic systems of vowels and consonants with astrological interpretations from the positions of the planets. When the Buddha taught the Kalachakra Tantra in South India, he taught it in terms of the material and the approach practised at that time. Therefore, the Indian basis of Tibetan astrology and astronomy has much in common with the Hindu system of astrology. Thus, they also have certain elements in common with the Greek system, regarding the use of the zodiac as we know it in the West.

The Chinese system of calculations used in Tibetan astrology deals primarily with personal horoscopes and uses magical squares in its calculations. These are squares whose sides all add up to the same number, whether you go horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. These magical squares appeared later in Arabic astrology and astronomy. From Chinese astrology come the cycles of the animals, such as the year of the tiger and the year of the monkey, and the presentation of the five elements, earth, water, fire, wood and metal. Within this five element theory is the theory of which elements are the mother of the other elements, which elements are the child of other elements, which are the enemy and which are the friend. The Chinese set of five elements is different than the Indian set of five elements, earth, water, fire, wind and space. In Chinese astrology certain aspects are also used from the I Ching or the Book of Changes. This astrological system comes from central Asia and develops correlations between the five elements and the cycle of twelve animals, from which is derived the cycle of sixty years. Chinese astrology first came into Tibet during the time of King Sonstsen Gampo in the eight century. He had both a Chinese and Nepali wife, and the Chinese wife brought with her various Chinese astrological materials. Later, this declined somewhat and a new wave came in from the Kwota region of central Asia. Thus, we have these two influences coming together in Tibet starting in the tenth century.

Indian astrology came into Tibet with the Kalachakra Tantra, which was translated and brought into Tibet with different translators at various times, mostly between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. In Tibet it became quite prominent in the Sakya tradition and the early Kagyu tradition. Both Indian and Chine-

se astrology were combined and reworked by the Tibetans and, in this way, various traditions of Tibetan astrology developed. One lineage is known as the Tsor-pu lineage, started by the third Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje, who wrote extensive commentaries to the Kalachakra Tantra during the thirteenth century. The astrology practised today among the Kagyus derives from these commentaries. The lineage and commentaries of the Sakyas was developed by various masters who wrote further commentaries to the Kalachakra material. Based on the tradition fo three great masters, known as the three Gyatsos, Phugpa Lhundrub Gyatso, Tsangba Gyatso, and Khadrub Norzang Gyatso, another lineage of Tibetan astrology began. These great masters lived two generations after Tsongkhapa in the fifteenth century. The tradition they founded is known as the Phug tradition of astrology, and this is now followed by the Sakya, Nyingma and Gelugpa schools within Tibet.

Differences exist between these major Tibetan lineages of astrology, primarily in terms of the mechanism used for bringing the lunar calendar into correlation with the solar cycle. In order to do this, it is necessary within the calendar to add an extra month or to add or delete extra days so that the new and full moon works out properly. The particular time that the extra day is added or deleted or the extra month is added is slightly different in the calendars prepared by the mathematical rules of these two systems.

The Tibetan calendar derives primarily from the Indian astrological material of the Kalachakra Tantra, and is organized in terms of sixty year cycles, with the first cycle starting in the year 1027. These sixty year cycles were also found in India, although not used in the Hindu system to as great an extent as in the Kalachakra system. Each of the sixty year cycles correlates with the cycle of the planet Jupiter, which passes through the zodiac once every twelve years. Thus, five times twelve, or five Jupiter cycles, takes a sixty year cycle. Each of these years in this cycle is given a particular name. All the calculations for the position of the sun and planets are done in terms of this cycle. The only element added into this from Chinese astrology is a correlation of each of these years of the Jupiter cycle with the five elements and the twelve animals. In this way, we get the year of the Fire Monkey, and so forth. This comes specifically from the central Asian development of Chinese astrology, but it is not intrinsic to any of the calculations used for making the ephemeris or calculating the calendar.

The Kalachakra system of calculations for the calendar and the position of the planets is similar to that of ancient Greece and India. It is based on certain mathematical models from which you can predict the position of the planets and their motion. Therefore, it is unlike the Chinese system, which developed quite early by deriving the position and the motion of the planets from observation. The feature was also a prominent feature of the later Arab astrology. When the Arab influence came into India, various observatories were built there during a much later period.

The early Hindu astronomy is based primarily on mathematical models. The ancient Greeks used geometry and different proportions from geometry to determine and describe the motion of the planets. This was done in terms of a model that had the earth as its centre, with the sun and the moon both revolving around the earth. Venus and Mercury were described as revolving around the earth. This was a common feature in Indian astrology as well. The ancient Indian astronomy developed and used the system of sines, so that you could first calculate the circular motion of the planets and then, by means of the sine function, do a trigonometric calculation for the epicycles to correct the orbits of the planets. This feature was also found in the Kalachakra system as it went into Tibet. There the sine tables were not listed or described as such, but they have been incorporated into the calculations.

In the Kalachakra systems, the heavens are divided into the twelve signs of the zodiac. This feature is also found in the ancient Greek and Hindu systems, and the names are the same, along with the assignment of the planets to the days of the week. In the Kalachakra system the planets rose at different times in intervals, so the names of the days of the week were assigned in correlation with the time and place in the sky when each planet first rose. Another dominant feature in the Kalachakra system as it went into Tibet is the division of the plan of the zodiac into either 27 or 28 constellations, known as the lunar mansions. This feature was not present in Greek astrology, but was found in the Chinese system. A great deal of disagreement exists regarding who invented it first, the Chinese or the Indians, and that is not an issue that can be clearly decided. The Chinese approach is quite different because it does not present the zodiac as the predominant feature for describing the position and motion of the planets in the heavens. Instead, the emphasis is on the polestar, with the 28 constellations revolving around it. The polestar is thus like the north pole, and the Chinese compare the revolution of the planets around it to the way the ministers and various state officials revolve around the Emperor. In this way, the features of traditional Chinese philosophy, primarily Confucianism, are incorporated into the system of astrology.

In Indian astrology, these 27 or 28 constellations are described in terms of the actual plan of the zodiac. The individual stars found in these constellations are slightly different in the Indian and Chinese systems. The system of the lunar mansions also became a feature later, in Arab astrology, but never found its way into the Greek system or into our current Western astrology and astronomy. When the heavens are divided into the twelve signs of the zodiac, each sign has thirty degrees or hours, as in the Greek system. However, when you divide that same plan into 27 divisions in the Kalachakra system, then each has sixty degrees or hours. Almost all the calculations or descriptions of the planets in the Kalachakra system are done in terms of the 27 lunar mansions, each divided into sixty degrees. The only time when the calculations are done in terms of a twelve fold division of the heavens, each with thirty degrees, is during the calculations of the ascendent, which is not used as much in the personal horoscope as it is for prognostication (prediction). These calculations are done with a gnomen, a vertical stick that casts a shadow on the earth. Based on the length of the shadow and how far north it is, you have a substitute for a clock, which enables you to determine the time so that you can calculate the ascendent.

Ten planets are described in the Kalachakra system. They are the sun and moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and the north and south node planets. These are the nodes of the moon that are involved in eclipses. As in the Indian system, these nodes are described as being planets. The north node is called the planet Rahu and the south is called Kalakni, unlike the Indian system,

where it is called Ketu. The tenth planet, whose orbit is very close to the sun, is called Comet. The Kalachakra system has all the mathematical formulas for calculating the position of these ten planets in terms of their daily motion.

Another feature the Kalachakra system chares with the Hindu system is that it is a fixed star system. This means that the signs of the zodiac are actually correlated to fixed star positions, rather than moving when the vernal equinox occurs, as they do in Western astrology. In Western astrology and astronomy, the position of zero degrees is always determined by where the sun is at the time of the vernal equinox. This therefore takes into consideration the procession of the equinox, because each year, the actual position of the sun at the time of the equinox alters slightly. It is because of this feature that you get the presentation in Western astrology of this being the age of Pisces, moving into the age of Aquarius. The Hindu system, in which the position of the zodiac, or zero degrees position, is always fixed to a specific position of the stars and the constellations, disregarding the shift at the vernal equinox. This means that if you have a calculation of the position of the sun, for example, according to the Western system, you will come up with a certain degree in the zodiac, and if you do it in either the Hindu or Buddhist system, you come up with a different degree. In order to correlate the two systems, it is necessary to correct for the procession of the equinox.

If you actually want to make a correlation between the Western and Eastern systems, it is necessary to transpose from one system to the other. The question may be asked to whether this is necessary in the case of astrology. In other words, suppose there is a certain description of what it means for a planet to be in Sagittarius, for example, in the Kalachakra system. Should we interpret that in terms of what we understand in the West as Sagittarius, or should we transpose it into Taurus, which would be the case if you wanted to make the adjustment for the procession of the equinox? I think that it may not be necessary to transpose from one system to another in order to gain the information from Tibetan astrology, but more research is needed in this area. In other words, you could look at the various pieces of information derived from an analysis of the position of the planets in the Kalachakra system, and see if it is more accurate when transposed into the Western system. My personal feeling is that it may very well turn out to be the case that there is no need at all to introduce the procession of the equinox into the Tibetan system of astrology. This is in accordance with the general idea that it is no good to mix two systems, the Western and the Tibetan. Each of them may be done individually according to its own rules and customs, and with its own information as the result.

The main astrological information derived primarily from the Kalachakra system as presented in Tibetan astrology and astronomy is what is known as horary astrology, or astrology of the hours. This is used to determine what day and time of day is auspicious or inauspicious for various activities. First, you take into consideration the constellation out of the 27 mansions of the moon that the sun is in. Each of these constellations is correlated with one of four elements from the five Indian elements, earth, water, fire and air. The next feature that is looked at is what is known as the lunar weekday. The moon goes through a cycle from full moon to full moon. Translated into solar days, that covers approximately 29½ days, but that period is divided here into 30. Therefore, each of these lunar weekdays is assigned to a planet, consistent with the planets that are used for naming the days of the week. Then each of these planets or weekdays is assigned to one of the four elements. Thus, during the course of a month, the sun will change from one of the lunar constellations or mansions to the next at a precise time on a certain day. Likewise, the moon will shift from being in one lunar weekday to the next lunar weekday at a precise time on a certain day. Then you look at the elements at any particular time of day which are in operation in terms of where the sun is and what point in the lunar weekday cycle you are at, and you can interpret the auspiciousness or inauspiciousness of that time in terms of how these two elements go together. Either they will combine very well, or they will clash with each other, or they will have a neutral relation.

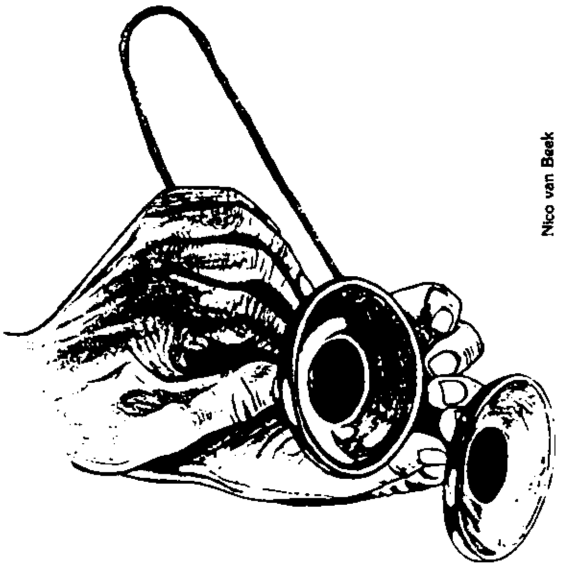
In addition, a third aspect that is looked at is the specific date of the lunar month, and this will start each day at the time of dawn. The fourth aspect looked at is called the conjunction period. This is the period of time or interval during which the combined motion of the sun and moon - and here the moon is referring to this lunar weekday cycle of motion of the moon - add up to one twenty-seventh of the 360 degrees of the zodiac. In other words, you get 27 divisions of the zodiac into the 27 mansions, and each of these 27 divisions is referring to a period of time of the combined motion of the sun and moon. So, likewise, these are going to start at different times of day during the course of a month, each with a certain interpretation as well. The fifth element is called the causal factor element. Here you take the thirty day lunar month and divide it into eleven aspects. The first of these aspect covers the first half day. The second half of the first day and the first half of the second day would be the next element. This continues for seven elements or aspects which will each cover the last half of one day and the first half of another. This cycle of seven, after the first half day, will repeat four times, so now we get to the second half of the 29th day, which will be the ninth element. The tenth and elventh elements will be on the 30th day. In this way, the thirty day lunar cycle will be divided into eleven aspects and each of these will have an interpretation. Further information may be gained regarding the auspiciousness of a time by looking not only at the correlation of the elements of the sun's position and the lunar weekday period, but also the date, conjuction period, and the causal factor period. Since all of these start at different times during the day, you can get a very fine division of analysis of each period of the day.

Since there are many other aspects of Tibetan astrology, this is just an outline of the most predominant and oustanding features of the Kalachakra system. There are few materials available in foreign languages at this point for the study of Tibetan astrology, but the main place where it can be studied with the Tibetans is in Dharmasala, India, at the Tibetan Medical Center. Tibetan astrology has traditionally been studied in conjuction with Tibetan medicine, and in fact the main centers of study are called the medical and astrological combined center. Astrology is used in medicine to determine the most auspicious times for performing various medical operations and procedures, including moxabustion, or the burning of various herbs on different spots on the body. It is also used for correlating this to the motion of the energies and centers within the body in relation to the external lunar cycles and so forth. Therefore, Tibetan astrology and astronomy are an important part of the Tibetan medical system. In addition to this, astrology forms an integral part of the meditative system of Kalachakra, or the Cycle of Time Tantra, in which various meditations are done analogous to the way the universe works. In this way, the practitioner may harness these different energies and use them to become enlightened for the benefit of all beings.

Transcribed by Lucienne van den Ende.

Edited by Lyn Arwen Bose.

Upasaka vows for lay practioners



To fulfill the highest potential of our mind and to purify and completely develop our mind, we have to confess and purify our negativities. Moreover, by doing so, we create a collection of merit and wisdom enabling us to obtain the body and mind of a completely pure and developed being. By realizing the negative activities we have engaged in since beginingless time, and then by confessing them with the four opponent forces, we purify ourselves of negative energy. These include:

1. Feeling regret for wat you did, while not indulging in an apathetic sense of guilt.

2. Promising never to do these negative actions again.

3. Taking Refuge and generating bodhicitta. Negative in the above context means harmful activities that are a source of shame to us because they hinder us from reaching our goal, and a source of shame to others because they hinder our mental development for the sake of all sentient beings. In this way, negative deeds are directed against ourselves and all beings. To counteract this, we take Refuge and generate bodhicitta.

4. Reciting mantras or sutras, meditating on emptiness and making statues, stupas, dharma-books, etc.

If we confess our negative deeds with the four opponent forces, we purify these activities, we lessen the future karmic consequences, and we put ourselves back on the track of spiritual development. For the creation of a collection of merit several methods therefore exist, such as the development of bodhicitta, the making of offerings to the Three Jewels, and the keeping of vows.

The vows for individual liberation are different for laypeople and for monks or nuns. The lay vows are of two kinds. Vows may be taken for one day, in a manner similar to the Eight Mahayana Precepts, or one or more precepts may be taken for the rest of one's life. The vows for the Buddhist lay practitioner are taken before a spiritual teacher after one has previously taken Refuge. The five lay precepts are the following vows:

not to kill;

not to steal;

not to lie;

not to engage in sexual misconduct;

no to use intoxicants.

The taking of lay vows is always preceded by the taking of Refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. This taking of Refuge means that we consciously give a direction to our lives by following the Buddha and his teachings and seeking support from Dharma friends, people who are giving the same direction to their lives. We try to consciously renew this Refuge every day, until we have reached the highest stage of purified growth. Every meditation, therefore, begins with the renewal of our decision to give this direction to our life.

In addition, to maintain the taking of Refuge, certain actions are encouraged and certain actions are proscribed. After taking Refuge in the Buddha, for example, you cannot take refuge in wordly gods such als Brahma or trust them in the depths of your heart. You cannot do rituals which bring harm to others, such as the sacrifice of animals, or place confidence in teachers who are antagonstic to Buddhism. After taking Refuge in the Dharma, you cannot inflict harm upon any sentient being, or lend your support to the inflicting of harm by others. After taking Refuge in the Sangha, you cannot maintain friendships with opponents of Buddhism.

Because we take Refuge, certain activities are encouraged. We should maintain a respectful attitude in front of images of the Buddha, regarding them as representations of the Buddha himself, and therefore should never place them on the ground. We should express our respect in front of images of the Buddha by examining our faults. Because we take Refuge in the Dharma, we should express our respect toward all printed materials that contain the teachings by not placing them on the ground, using them

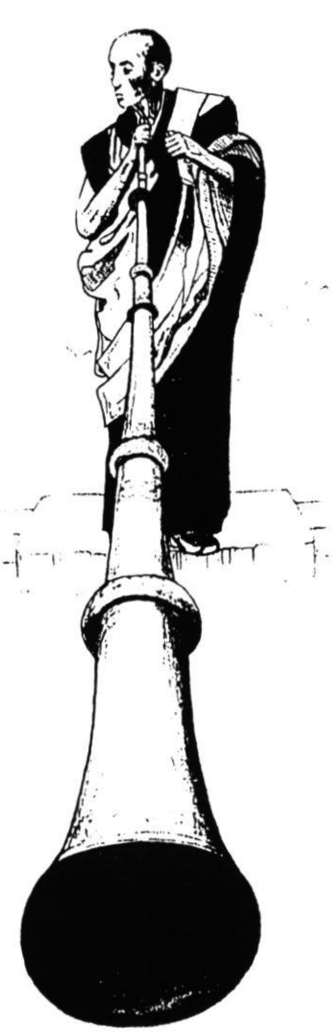
as merchandise or putting them together with unclean items such as shoes in the same bag. Because we take Refuge in the Sangha, we should give up prejudices toward different Sangha communities and regard each monk and nun as the Sangha itself. We should not step on the clothes of ordained people or put their clothes in a dirty place.

For the accumulation of wisdom, it is necessary to develop an intellectual understanding of emptiness, the lack of inherent existence, and to generate a direct experience of the lack of inherent existence. This direct experiencing of emptiness forever puts an end to our recurrent frustrations and problems. We will no longer be reborn by the power of our delusions, afflicted emotions, and negative impulses. The direct experience of the lack of inherent existence therefore results in lasting liberation. The collection of wisdom and merit also becomes the cause for the following beneficial effects:

1. Finding a spiritual teacher.
2. Having the opportunity to listen to the teachings, to study them, and to meditate on them.
3. Not experiencing big hindrances in studying and practising the teachings.
4. Being able to remember, understand, and experience the content of the teachings.
5. Finally experiencing the absolute truth.

We may have an initial motivation, in which we are merely dedicating ourselves to receiving a good rebirth, or we may have a middle motivation, in which we are dedicated to liberating ourselves forever from all frustrations and problems. We may have the Mahayana motivation, in which we dedicate ourselves to reaching the fullest potential of our development, in order to liberate all sentient beings. In each case, we need a great store of merit to be able to reach our goal of a good rebirth, liberation, or Buddhahood.

We can accumulate positive energy by making offerings to the Three Jewels. We can make offerings to the Buddhas by making statues or having them made, by dedicating offerings and pujas, or having them dedicated. We can make offerings to the Dharma by sponsoring, or in any way helping with, the translation or printing of the Buddha's teachings in books, Dharma magazines, etc. We can make offerings to the Sangha by sponsoring a "full-time" practitioner with money or materials. A relatively easy and, in this time of spiritual degeneration, especially powerful way to create an uninterrupted stream of positive energy, is the taking and keeping of precepts.



Nico van Beek

There are three kinds of precepts in Mahayana Buddhism, the vows of individual liberation, the Bodhisattva vows to develop bodhicitta, and the Tantric vows. These three categories are in conformity with the "Graduated path to Enlightenment" (Tibetan: Lam Rim) as set forth by Lama Tsong Khapa, the founder of the Gelugpa tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. They are also in accordance with the teachings of Gampopa, the founder of the Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, and with the teachings of the Sakya tradition called, "Renouncing the Four Attachments". The first set of vows are for the development of renunciation, with the goal of individual liberation. For the development of bodhicitta, we can first keep the aspiring Bodhisattva vows and, later, the engaging Bodhisattva vows. Based on a strong urge for liberation, a strong wish to liberate all sentient beings, and an intellectual understanding of the lack of inherent existence, the tantric methods may be practised according tot the Yogatantra and the Annutarayogatantra. In this case, the practitioner will keep both the engaging Bodhisattva vows and the tantric vows. Because every stage of practice depends on the previous stage, the vows for individual liberation are the starting point.

By thus training ourselves carefully, and by relying on a trustworthy teacher and training our minds, we as, followers of the Dharma, try to abide in the precepts and keep the senses under control. Taking as many precepts as we can keep, we try to practise loving-kindness towards all beings, and make offerings to the Three Jewels. The precepts are generally taken for life, but may be given back and later on received again from a spiritual teacher. If we break one of the precepts by a serious misdeed, such as killing a human being, we lose all the precepts and must receive them all again. Ik we break a precept by a lesser misdeed, such as killing an animal, we can confess this to someone who keeps this precept or keeps higher precepts. Afterwards, we can take the broken precept again on our own, renew our promise, and apply the four opponent forces to lessen the undesirable consequences. Although many people make determinations by themselves, such as not to kill, the amount of positive energy they generate is small compared to the amount generated by taking the formal vows in the presence of a qualified teacher. Thus, the taking of the Upasaka (Tibetan: Genyen) vows is another practise to help us reach liberation for the benefit of all beings.

Translated from Tibetan in Dutch: Gelong Thubten Tsépèl.

Dutch-English: Lucienne v.d. Ende.

Tibetan Medicine in Holland

HOW IT ALL STARTED

In 1983, Jan-Paul Kool, manager of the Maitreya Institute, invited Dr. Lobsang Dolma to the Netherlands. Jan-Paul Kool, who was suffering from severe rheumatism, had met Dr. Dolma during one of his visits to Dharamsala and was impressed by her medical skills. After using Tibetan medicines himself and noticing the positive effect they had on his disease he thought that it could be very beneficial for many more people here to get in contact with this, almost unknown, Tibetan medical system.

During her stay in Bruchem Dr. Dolma gave consultations and medicines to more than 200 patients. She also gave a seminar about Tibetan medicine which was attended by many people and resulted in a Dutch book about Tibetan Medicine.

After this first visit of a Tibetan doctor, other people also invited Tibetan doctors. Dr. Trogawa Rinpoche, a well-known Nyingma teacher, has been coming to our country once a year since 1985 and Dr. Rabgay visited Holland in winter 1987.

FOUNDATION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE N.S.T.G.

In March 1987 Jan-Paul Kool invited several people whom he knew were interested in Tibetan Medicine to discuss the possibility of establishing an organization about Tibetan medicine. It was thought that it would be much better for everyone if the visits of Tibetan doctors were coordinated to assure regular visits, guarantee the quality of the organization, direct the contents of lectures etc.

At first it was thought wise that this Foundation for Tibetan Medicine would be a department of the internationally already well-known Maitreya Institute, but later it was decided to make it an independent organization. It appeared that cooperation with other groups, Buddhist and non-Buddhist, would be much easier. Therefore: The Dutch Foundation for the promotion of Tibetan Medicine (Nederlandse Stichting ter bevordering van de Tibetaanse Geneeskunde = N.S.T.G.) was started as a non-profit organization which strives to make Tibetan medicine more widely known in the Netherlands and to cooperate with people in other countries who have the same aim. The Foundation is trying to achieve this by:

- giving information about Tibetan Medicine,
- organizing visits of Tibetan doctors to the Netherlands,
- promoting contact between Tibetan and Western doctors,
- stimulating scientific research on the efficacy of Tibetan Medicine in curing various illnesses and diseases.

The N.S.T.G. works closely with the Tibetan Medical Institute in Dharamsala, India, the only official training college for Tibetan doctors outside Tibet. The Foundation invites doctors associated with this institute to visit our country on a regular basis.

The first activity of the N.S.T.G. was the visit in November 1987 of Dr. Lobsang Wangyal, personal physician of H.H. The Dalai Lama. His visit was very succesful and showed once again how valuable the Tibetan medical system is. After his visit the N.S.T.G. had a waiting list of nearly a hundred people who wanted consultations. In 1988 the N.S.T.G. invited Dr. Trogawa Rinpoche., Dr. Dhadon, Dr. Wangyal and Dr. Tamdin and the number of patients who had a consultation with a Tibetan doctor, which was 84 after the visit of Dr. Wangyal, increased to nearly 500.

After the visits of Dr. Dhadon and Dr. Pema Dorjee in 1989 the number of patients was extended to 740. Many of these patients returned for further treatment. The third visit in 1989 will be by Dr. Kunga in November/December and also in 1990, we expect three Tibetan doctors to visit the Netherlands in March, July and November.

All patients that come for a consultation receive questionnaires in which they are asked to report their experiences with Tibetan medicines and their results. This data can be used to get a more precise view about the efficacy of Tibetan Medicine and as pilot for later official scientific studies.

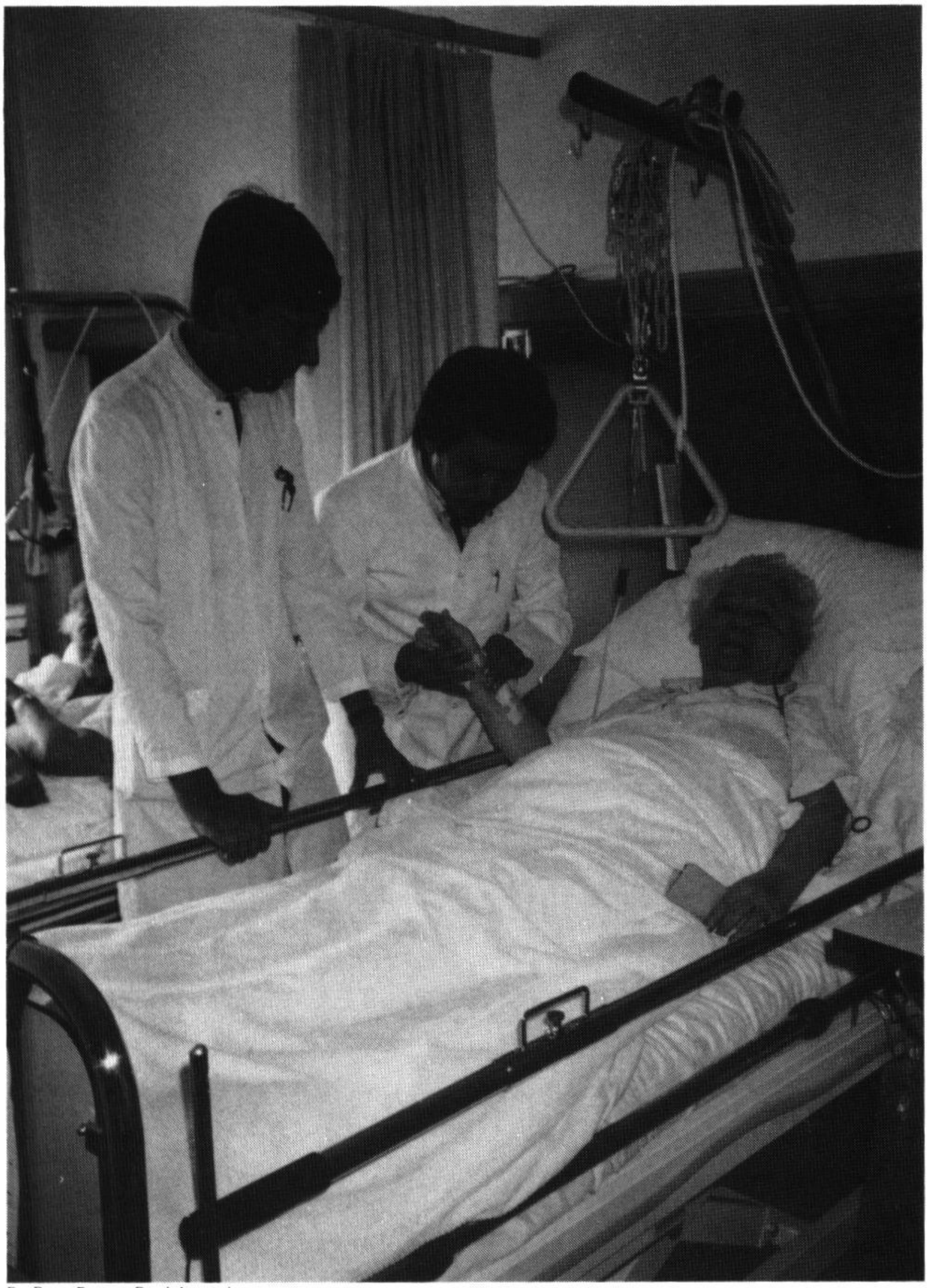
Preparations are already being made to start an official scientific study on Tibetan diagnostic methods in the near future in a hospital in Amsterdam. As soon as there is permanently a Tibetan doctor in Holland, studies in which treatment are involved will be initiated.

SHORT INTRODUCTION INTO THE TIBETAN MEDICAL SYSTEM

In the Tibetan medical system the concepts about disease are completely different from the ideas in our Western medical system. The Tibetan Medical system is closely related to Tibetan Buddhism and without a thorough knowledge of Buddhism, it is nearly impossible to understand the Tibetan medical system. Much advice given by Tibetan doctors to their patients is based on this spiritual background.

It is said that there are three energies in the body which are in balance in a healthy body. Once they are disturbed, disease may arise. These energies are called wind, bile and phlegm (Tibetan: Lung, Tripa, Pégèn). Wind energy is the mobile energy in the body and is directly related to the nervous system and the mind. It also controls breathing, speech, muscular activity, urination, and the relaying of sensory input. Bile energy is the heat energy in the body, which is responsible for the whole digestive system and heat in the body. Phlegm energy is called the cold energy in the body and it is connected with the stability of the body, and the lymphatic system.

According to the Tibetan medical system there are distinct and direct causes for diseases. The distant causes for diseases are present in every human being and they are based on the fundamental thought in Tibetan Buddhism that ignorance is the cause of all suffering. Due to ignorance three mental poisons are produced, namely desire, hatred and closedmindedness. These mental poisons are reflected respectively in the wind, bile and phlegm energies and as long as they are in balance a person is healthy. Disturbance of this balance can be due to one of the so-called four direct causes of disease which are: diet, behaviour, evil spirits and seasonal influences. Since the energies are also related to the three mental poisons, this means that in Tibetan medicine there is always a psychosomatic aspect or possibility in any disease.



Dr. Pema Dorje in Dutch hospital

Treatment by a Tibetan doctor will always concentrate on the disturbance of the balance between the three energies and never on symptoms. Once the balance is restored, the symptoms will disappear. Tibetan doctors will always start treatment by giving advice on diet and behaviour. If it is not possible to cure the disease by these methods, medicines and sometimes external therapies are recommended. Medicines are all made from natural products, mainly herbs but also minerals and (carefully detoxified) metals. The characteristics and medicinal action of the medicines is based on the theory of the five cosmic energies that are present in all animate and inanimate phenomena according to Buddhism.

Although Tibetan physicians never recorded any results of their treatments, we have strong indications based on personal communication with several Tibetan doctors and the experiences of our patients that Tibetan medicines are very beneficial for chronic diseases such as arthritis, multiple sclerosis, muscle diseases, diabetes, migraine, high blood pressure, allergies, ulcers and also during the early stages of cancer.

The N.S.T.G. hopes that many more people in the future may benefit from this valuable medical system.

Marjoleine Brouwer

N.S.T.G. people and Dr. Dhadon and Dr. Lobsang Tsultrim

Jan-Paul Kool

Literature:
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Health through balance, Dr. Yeshi Dhonden, Snow Lion Publication, 1986.
Tibetan Buddhist Medicine and Psychiatry, Terry Clifford, Samuel Weiser Inc., 1984.

N.S.T.G.
Eastonstraat 52,
1068 JA Amsterdam,
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020 - 193436

Lama's final teaching

This is a personal account of Margot Kool on Lama's final teaching on death, intermediate state and rebirth or how the teaching continued from Lama Yeshe to Lama Tenzin Ösel Rinpoche.

I met my husband in 1978 in one of the eldest pub's in Holland where they still throw clean white sand on the wooden floor every day. A midst the busy atmosphere of a Friday evening where people were relaxing from a week's work, we immediately started talking about Buddhism. Jan-Paul had followed some courses already and was talking enthousiastically about going to England where some Tibetan Lama's would give teachings at Manjushri Institute in Cumbria. I wanted to go with him but was not sure to ask it as I thought it would be distracting for him to have a woman around. Lucky enough there was a friend of Jan-Paul who asked him why he did not ask me to come with him to England. Then he asked me and we went together crossing the North Sea by ferry. When we arrived at the center I felt quite lost. Everyone and everything seemed so holy. There were people bowing in front of statues and teachers, chanting strange words from their lips. H.H. Song Rinpoche seated on a high throne gave Lam Rim teachings translated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche. My understanding of English was reasonable, at least I thought so, until I was confronted with the task of trying to distinguish some words in the flood of unfamiliar terms. My knees were hurting and I was not used to sit and listen for such a long time. But once in a while I felt relaxed in His Presence.

Nearing the end of the ten days course there was a big excitement as a certain Lama Yeshe was arriving. We all went outside and lined up with incense sticks burning in our hands. He came out of the car with a radiantly smiling face full of energy, bowing down to all of us with his left hand in a greeting posture in front of his heart, constantly saying: "Thank you, thank you so very much." I went to the first lecture he gave, his other lectures were for more advanced students and I was brand new. There was much less problem to understand him as he spoke directly in English. He spoke with his whole body, speech and mind. He said: "It is better if you understand one thing well, than a thousand half." This comforted me a lot as I did understand a few things after the ten days course. A few weeks later we were married by Lama Yeshe during a Manjushri puja and to me it felt like coming home twice, to Buddhism and my husband.

Shortly after we went to the East, meeting many lama's and especially H.H. the Dalai Lama and we received many blessings, not realising at the time they must have been aimed at the development of the Maitreya Institute. Our honeymoon mainly consisted of months of retreat in a cave at Tso Pema. At the end of this period I had a dream in which the resident lama at the caves, Lama Wangdor, appeared and told me we had to go back tot the West because Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa would bring our head and heart together. Whatever that meant, we went back to Holland and were invited for a boat ride by a friend passing Paula's houseboat. Paula, director of Maitreya Institute, saw us sailing by and yelled at the top of her voice that Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa would come to Holland in August and if we could help. This is how we got involved in the centre.

Although I did not see Lama Yeshe a lot, as working for the centre kept us in Holland, I had the good fortune of hosting him twice in our home when he was visiting Holland. On one of these occasions I brought him something to drink in the evening. While I was talking to him he suddenly fell down on the bed, appearing to be dead. I stayed calm because I had heard he had done this with other students before. After a while I started to doubt. Then he got up quickly and asked me: "Margot, are you scared?". I told him that I heard he had pulled this joke before and asked him: "But what when you really die, we will all think it is a joke." Lama Yeshe started laughing and laughing and said: "But Margot, death is a joke." I heard myself thinking: "Maybe it is for you, but not yet for me." He seemed to prepare me in many ways, one of them being surely not to become attached to him.

When he really died in 1984 I could not cry, it was only when his ashes arrived at the gompa of Maitreya Institute, that the reality of his death made me cry during the whole puja. When I first heard the news of his death I thought: "But I knew him too short, there is still so much to learn, how will I continue without him." Three days later I was thinking about Lama when I started to meditate. Heruka-Vajrasatva came to my mind and I really wanted to purify all my mistakes so that he would return soon. During this meditation I felt Lama suddenly very strong, even stronger then when he was alive. That non-dual love made me feel the complete mandala, all the centers, all his students, everything melting in a feeling of oneness. I realised I was still in touch with Lama, even while he was passing through the intermediate state, he was still teaching me.

In August 1986, prior to the three weeks of teachings by Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Maitreya Institute, we suddenly received a phonecall announcing the arrival of Lama Ösel Rinpoche. I had no expectations, busy as usual with preparations for the course, when Lama Ösel entered the center on the arm of his mother. It was the first time I met him and I lowered my head in a deep bow receiving his blessings while the same familiar wave of energy came towards me which I knew from Lama Yeshe. There was no doubt about it.

That same night I dreamt about Lama Ösel and Lama Zopa Rinpoche. We were watching television, some cowboy movie with good and bad guys, while Lama Ösel was commenting with gestures and baby-talk. In the dream Lama Zopa turned to me and said: "Although it is impossible to understand what he is saying, his words have a very deep mea-

ning. Actually it is not so good for him to watch television because whatever suffering he sees on the TV he takes upon himself and his physical body is not strong enough yet." So even without speaking understandably the teachings continued.

In 1987 we met again in France. I loved to see Lama Zopa's devotion towards him and his education skills. Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Jan-Paul and I had lunch together. Somewhere outside Lama Ösel Rinpoche was crying. He came in on the arm of Basili, his caretaker. Lama Zopa asked him why he had been crying. He did not answer. Lama Zopa asked him if he had eaten too much chocolate. (Lama Yeshe used chocolate a lot as an example during his teachings.) He nodded his head. then Lama Zopa asked if he had been beaten by Basili. He answered: "Yes". And Lama Zopa explained to him that Basili had been very kind to beat him.

During the lunch Lama Ösel asked us several times to come and play with him outside. The next day I played with him in the park while I was trying to figure out how to behave towards him. Suddenly there was Lama Yeshe's voice through my head saying: "Just be natural dear." It was the same answer he gave me once when I asked him how he made rain in Australia. We enjoyed a whole afternoon playing together.

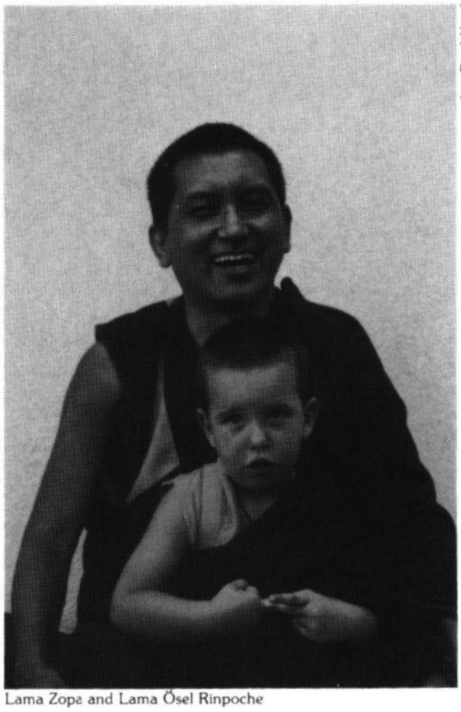
At a directors' and education meeting in May 1989 there was a one day management course given by Hanneke. The way she worked with us feels familiar. It started with being in your element, experiencing a very positive self image and all done in a very practical way. It gave me a key which fits to the Lam Rim and the Tantra as well. Later when I was telling in short how I integrate Buddhism with meditation and working with emotions, specifically for beginners, at another education meeting in London, someone remarked: "But that is just like Lama Yeshe, it is an introduction in tantra." Hanneke told me later that upon reading Lama Yeshe's book 'Introduction to Tantra', she felt she was doing the same thing, handling the same principles. Here were the same teachings again, already integrated in someone. The integration of the teachings in our own western lives was always encouraged strongly by him. It was especially his innovating imput which I was afraid of missing. His enormous space, the breaking down of every possible concept we might hang on to, leads to truly experiencing ourselves in our deepest nature. Now I know that his innovating imput is not lost and can manifest itself through so many beings, situations and maybe myself.

In August 1989 we celebrated our 10th anniversary of Maitreya Institute. Lama Zopa Rinpoche was unable to attend, but fortunately Lama Tenzin Ösel Rinpoche, the reincarnation of Lama Yeshe who started it all ten years ago, honoured us with a few days of his presence. Again I was so fortunate to cook for him. Many years ago I was cooking for Lama Yeshe and someone told me that it created very good karma to be around him and that even if I was not that lucky in my next life I would become one of his dogs. But things went a little differently and here I was cooking again for his new rebirth. The day before the festival we were rehearsing a Dharma play about Buddha defeating mara and reaching Enlightenment. When Lama Ösel Rinpoche saw this he insisted to act as the Buddha and sit on the throne. Almost fearlessly he sat there while he was heavily attacked by big mara's like Hermes and Alex. He knew his part well and upon lifting a board stating "I love you" all the mara's were subdued.

At lunch I was telling that I was sometimes watching television and that I needed some time for myself to relax. Lama immediately responded: You have time for yourself, I never have time for myself, I'm always busy for others." Many years ago Lama Yeshe told me that he had never one minute for himself, that he was always busy for others. That the only reason he was still on this earth was for his students. His body was a drag and he did not need to be here for himself. So even the same teaching continues, the one I need most to hear and practise.

The day after the festival we drove him to the airport. He was leaving for Switzerland to study Tibetan at Rabten Choeling. He was touching my hair softly with his little hand while he told me that he likes everybody, Tibetans, Americans, French, Italians... There is a long silence. Maybe he wanted to say 'Dutch' but did not know the word. Then finally he said: "And even the Chinese, and animals too."

Margot Kool



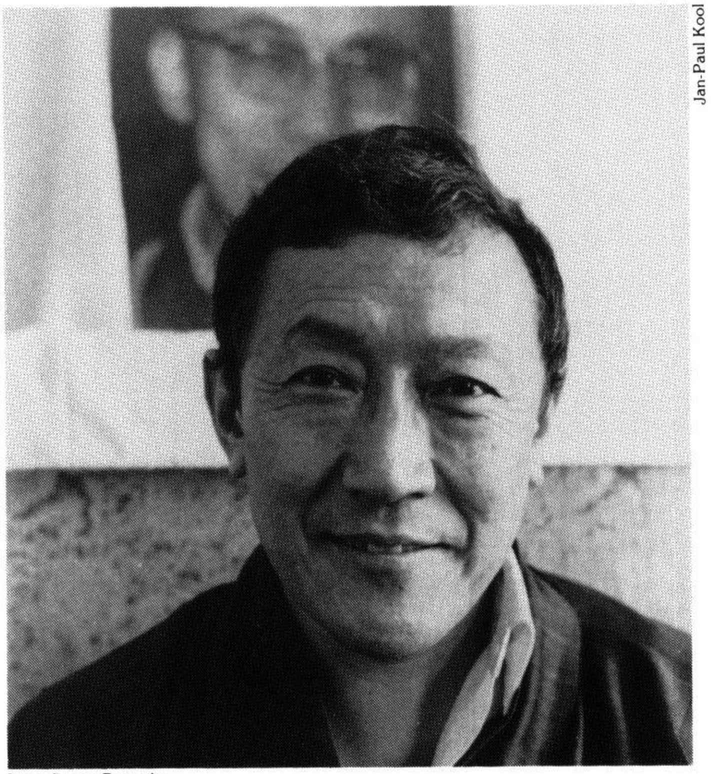
Jan-Paul Kool

Lama Zopa and Lama Ösel Rinpoche

Jan-Paul Kool

Lama Ösel on Buddha's throne

International Programme 1990



Lama Dagpo Rinpoche

(English translations)

The Dutch readers of this magazine will receive the whole course programme for 1990 (with Dutch translation) by separate mailing in January 1990. In the month of January the Maitreya Institute will have no courses.

HOW TO REACH THE MAITREYA INSTITUTE

By air:

Fly to Schiphol, Amsterdam Airport. From there, go by train to Apeldoorn. At Apeldoorn railway station, take bus 124, which goes to Zwolle. Get off after Emst, at bus stop "Laarstraat". Near the bus stop is restaurant "De Oude Aanleg" from where you can call us. You can have a refreshment while waiting for our car to pick you up.

By train:

Go to Apeldoorn. Then as above.

By car, from Utrecht:

Take motorway A 28 direction Zwolle. Take exit Epe. After about 10 kilometers, at the traffic lights near Epe, turn right direction Emst. After a few hundred meters, at restaurant "De Oude Aanleg", turn right. Follow the Laarstraat until the end of the asphalted road. Follow the dirt road until you see the sign "Maitreya Institute" on your left hand side.

By car, from Arnhem:

Take motorway A 50 direction Apeldoorn and Zwolle. About 20 kilometers past Apeldoorn, take exit Epe. At the traffic lights, turn left, direction Emst. After a few hundred meters, at restaurant "De Oude Aanleg", turn right, then as above.

Have a good journey!

LOCATION

Courses are held at the centre, Maitreya Institute, Heemhoeveweg 2, 8166 HA Emst, Holland. The centre consists of 2 buildings. One is the course area, with gompa, hall, kitchen, dining room, small bedrooms and dormitories. The other has the reception, shop and offices. The buildings are surrounded by 10 acres of woodlands and the environment is beautiful for taking walks. There are caravans and camping facilities.

CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

Participants must keep the five precepts, which are house rules: 1 - not killing, 2 - not stealing, 3 - no sexual conduct, 4 - no lying, 5 - no alcohol or drugs, no smoking. Dutch participants have to be subscribers to Maitreya Magazine 1990. The meals are vegetarian.

February 23-25
A LAMP FOR THE PATH
By: Venerable LAMA DAGPO RINPOCHE
English translation: Rosemary Patton

The venerable Lama Dagpo Rinpoche has been a regular guest-teacher at Maitreya Institute and is held in great esteem for his clarity and direct approach to the Dharma. Rinpoche, whose line of reincarnations goes back to Serlingpa (who gave the precious Bodhicitta teachings to Atisha), received a full monastic training in Tibet. In 1960 he came to Paris where he was invited to lecture Tibetan language at a university. He has been living and teaching in Paris since then.

The Lamp for the Path is a famous text written by Atisha of which Lama Tsong Khapa noted: "This text makes it easy to understand how there is nothing incompatible in all the indications (teachings) and makes every scriptural pronouncement, without exception, dawn on the mind as a personal guideline. It makes it easy to discover what the Triumphant One intended and protects anyone even from the abyss of 'the great mistake'. Because of these benefits, what discriminating person among the learned masters of India and Tibet would not have his or her mind be completely taken by these paths of the mind arranged in stages according to three scopes of spiritual motivation, the supreme instructions to which many fortunate ones have committed themselves wholeheartedly."

COURSE FEE: ƒ 120,— full board, dormitory. To be paid in advance to giroaccount: 43.05.057 in the name of Maitreya Institute Emst, mentioning: Lamp for the Path. Participants have to be subscribers to Maitreya Magazine 1990.
START WEEKEND: Friday evening 20.00 p.m. in Emst.
REGISTRATION: By telephone 05787-1450.

February 26 - March 2
A LAMP FOR THE PATH
By: Venerable LAMA DAGPO RINPOCHE
English translation: Rosemary Patton

In this five-day course Rinpoche will go more deeply into this famous text for about two hours each morning. Open only for those who have followed the preceding weekend.

COURSE FEE: ƒ 150,— full board, dormitory. To be paid in advance to giroaccount: 43.05.057 in the name of Maitreya Institute Emst, mentioning: Lamp for the Path II. Participants have to be subscribers to Maitreya Magazine 1990.
START: Monday morning 10.00 a.m. in Emst.
REGISTRATION: By telephone 05787-1450.

August 11-24
EUROPEAN LAM RIM COURSE
GRADUATED PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT
By: LAMA THUBTEN ZOPA RINPOCHE

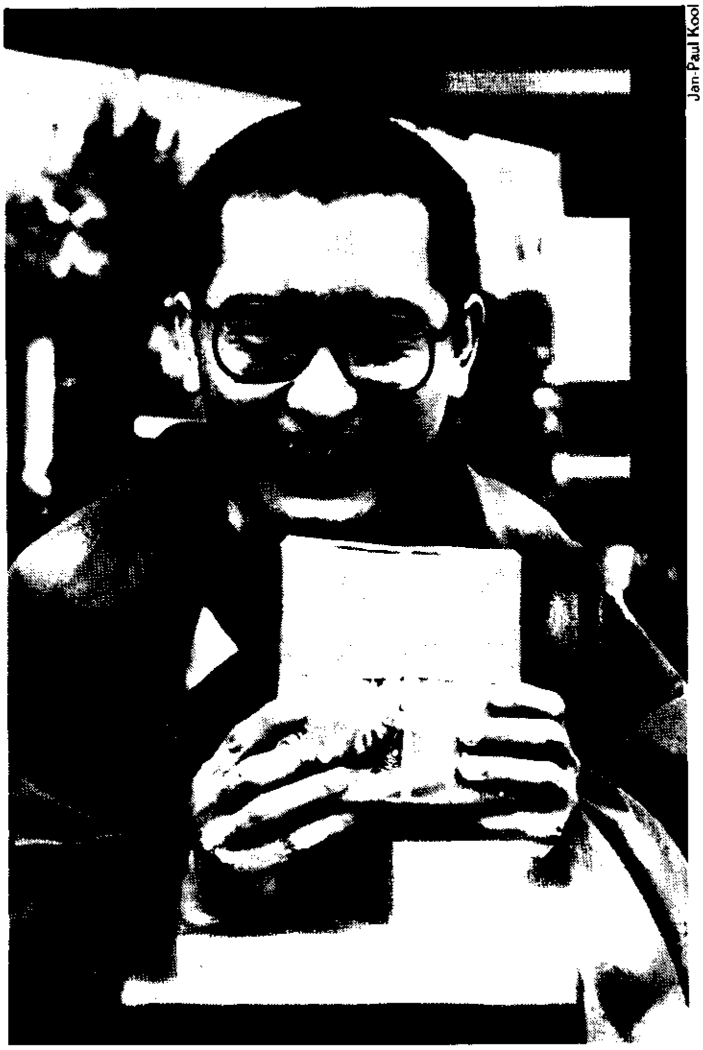
We are very pleased to host the first in a hopefully long series of yearly European Lam Rim courses with our beloved teacher Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche. These courses are modelled after the Kopan November courses. In the international atmosphere of brotherhood and peace, many people found deeper meaning in their lives and ways to work with it. The subject matter is the Graduated Path to Enlightenment, as taught by the great Lamas Atisha and Tsong Khapa. The teachings will be given in English. Occasionally during this course Geshe Konchog Lhundup will teach in Tibetan, with English translation. There will be simultaneous translations into the major European languages and into Dutch. Experienced western students will lead the meditations. The course offers a deep insight in the Buddhist way of life and thought and is suited for beginning students and advanced students who wish to gain a deeper understanding.

COURSE FEE: ƒ 200,— (includes rented facilities, travel costs LZR and party, donation to LZR, sound and translation equipment).
FOOD: ƒ 315,—, 3 meals a day with one warm meal (vegetarian) (including rented facilities, food, cooks, etc.)
ACCOMODATION: Camping (bring tent) ƒ 105,—. Dormitory ƒ 210,—. 2, 3 or 4 pers. room/caravan ƒ 350,—. Prices per person.
REGISTRATION: By letter indicating what accomodation is desired and what is your second choice. Indicate in what language you need translation. 2, 3 or 4 person rooms or caravans will be allocated firstly to groups or families who book together. 10% discount for FPMT-members. Discounts for Sangha and residents of European FPMT centres. Special arrangements for translators. Please register as soon as possible but at least before 31 June 1990. After receipt of your letter we will inform you how to pay the registration fee of ƒ 100,— and the remainder of the course fee etc. To receive translation one needs an FM radio with headphones or buy one at Maitreya for about ƒ 40,—.
START: Saturday August 11, 20.00 p.m. in Emst.

August 25-31
TANTRIC INITIATIONS
By: LAMA THUBTEN ZOPA RINPOCHE

Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche kindly accepted our request to stay one week more to give initiations upon request of the students. We hereby invite all students who want to participate in this week to let us know which initiations they would like Rinpoche to give to them before April 1, 1990. We will then decide according to your requests which initiations we will request Rinpoche to give.

COURSE FEE: ƒ 100,—.
FOOD: ƒ 157,50.
ACCOMODATION: Camping ƒ 52.50 (bring tent). Dormitory ƒ 105,—. 2, 3, 4 person room/caravan ƒ 175,—.
REGISTRATION: See Lam Rim course above. Send your requests for initiations.
START: Saturday, August 25, 20.00 p.m. in Emst.


Jan-Paul Kool

Noortje, Hermes, Geshela

December 10, 1990 - March 11, 1991
KALACHAKRA RETREAT
with
GELONG THUBTEN LODROE

A Kalachakra group retreat is planned to take place at the Maitreya Institute in Holland. Provided there are sufficient registrations, the retreat will start on December 10, 1990 and last for three months. English will be the common language. During the first three weeks, Dutch monk Thubten Lodroe (Hermes Brandt) will give instructions on the sadhana and will explain the retreat procedures. The actual retreat will start on the eve of December 31 (full moon), and will last for about two months. The fire puja is tentatively planned for March 11, 1991. Participants are required to attend the full three months and to follow a strict discipline.

The Maitreya Institute enjoys a quiet location in a pine forest and has modern facilities. Apart from dormitories, there is a limited number of single and double rooms available, which could enable some to do the retreat separately from but simultaneously with the group.

To do the Approximation Retreat, one needs to have received the Kalachakra initiation, preferably the "empowerment" (Tib: wang), rather than just the "subsequent permission" (Tib: jenang).

REGISTRATION: Write to Maitreya Institute, Heemhoeveweg 2, 8166 HA Emst, Holland, before September 1990.
PAYMENT: A deposit of f 100,— (Dutch guilders) must be sent together with your registration letter (registered); the balance is to be paid in cash upon arrival at Maitreya Institute. Upon registration, detailed information will be sent on how to reach the center, what to bring and so forth.
COURSE FEE (including dormitory accomodation and food): f 2,750 (approximately $ 1,375).
START: December 10, 20.00 p.m. in Emst.

MAITREYA INSTITUTE'S

Geshela, Hans, Hermes, Alex, Eugene, Jan, Tenzin, Koosje, Karmen, Edward, Lucienne, Loekie, Loek, Eric, Paula, Lan, Rein, Marcel, Margot and Jan-Paul
wish all the readers of Maitreya Magazine to have:

A SPLENDID YEAR 1990
FOR DHARMA PRACTICE

Long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama
Long live Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche
Long live Lama Tenzin Ösel Rinpoche

As you know every year the FPMT centres sponsor Long Life pujas for His Holiness, Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Ösel Rinpoche. This year's Long Life puja for His Holiness will take place during the Lojong teachings in March in Dharamsala. The Long Life pujas for Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Lama Ösel Rinpoche will also take place around this time. These pujas are a key to maintaining a close connection with our spiritual Teachers - not only for us individually but for our whole international family. We are, therefore, asking you to contribute to them as much as you can.

Max Redlich is organizing the puja for His Holiness and to give you an idea of what is involved and what the estimated expenses will be, we enclose an extract from a letter from Max for your persual:

So far $ 2900 have been received and as the various items take a long time to make, a *firm indication of the amount of its donation is needed from each centre in order to proceed* in the preparations which are currently stalled for lack of cash.

Items already ordered and underway

	Cost	
1. Dharmachakra	$ 3000	Actual cost $ 4500 but $ 1500 coming from private sources. Cost overrun due to a revised assessment of the gold required to plate it according to Rinpoche's suggestion.
2. 7 Symbols of a King	$ 250	Actual cost $ 2750 of which Rinpoche is offering $ 2500.
3. Double Dorje	$ 300	
Essential items needing to be ordered immediately.		
4. 8 Auspicious Symbols	$ 900	Ideally these should cost almost as much as the 7 symbols of a King (sigh).
5. Robes for His Holiness	$ 300	
Essential items that can be bought later.		
6. Long Life Statue	$ 1000	
7. Carpet	$ 250	
Total	***$ 6000***	
Items also needed		
8. 5 colours brocade	$ 300	
9. Gold and silver	?	

Items being borrowed

8 Auspicious Elements
Stupa, statue and text representing body, speech and mind
Texts
Monk's bowl
Bodhisattva staff.

A representation of the Universe is being made under Rinpoche's instruction by Jampa Chokyi but I don't know who is funding it.

Further expenses based on 1987 experience, for which money was collected at Bodhgaya:

His Holiness' and Tulkus' Tsog	$ 150	(Actually $ 300 but shared with Tibetans.)
Money Offering to His Holiness	$ 900	
General Tsog	$ 500	
Offerings to Tulkus, Monks and Nuns	$ 500	
Lights at Stupa, releasing animals	$ 100	
Miscellaneous	$ 150	
Total	$ 2300	

$ 20.000 is considered a reasonable amount for a Long Life Puja for His Holiness on so auspicious an occasion. At Kalachakra 1985, sponsored by Toepa organization, $ 10,000 was spent on the 8 Auspicious symbols alone. As we are committed to spreading Dharma in the West, our funds are needed mainly for that. Nevertheless, the importance of His Holiness to the realization of our aims and the aims of all sentient beings can never be overestimated. The karma created in situations such as this is powerful and longlasting.

Please use the example below to send your donation and letters.

Date ....
Contributor's name ....
Adress: ....
....

Wishes to contribute to:

The Long Life puja of His Holiness the Dalai Lama	US$ ....
The Long Life puja of Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche	US$ ....
The Long Life puja of Lama Tenzin Ösel Rinpoche	US$ ....
Total contribution	US$ ....

Please find enclosed a cheque or money order made payable to FPMT.

This should be mailed to FPMT Central Office, P.O. Box 1778, Soquel, CA 95073, U.S.A.

N.B. Outside the U.S.A. please send only International Money Orders or Bank Drafts, not personal cheques.

Or contact your local F.P.M.T. centre.

For Holland: Girorekening 43.05.057 or Bankaccount 65.85.11.548 in the name of Maitreya Institute, Emst, mentioning: Long Life Puja and for whom.